

Neighborhood Planning for Community Revitalization

East 38th Street Development Study

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East 38th Street Development Study

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

38th Street was once a bustling corridor as street cars ran along it and neighbors stopped off at various business nodes to do their everyday shopping. Currently it is operating as a residential street with some decayed and boarded storefronts, underutilized commercial space, and neglected housing, yet it also has viable businesses that are thriving despite the challenges they face. The advantages to 38th Street include: some attractive housing, a common car and bus route, nice-looking buildings like Bancroft School; and neighborhood leaders, business owners and residents who care about the revitalization of this important thoroughfare. Residents, businesses, neighborhoods and the City of Minneapolis must decide on an overall plan for this street, which runs through seven different neighborhoods. The key starting point is creating a positive identity for the street. Strong business nodes need to be supported while struggling business areas should be turned into housing. Economic incentives and aesthetics must be improved and cooperation and communication across the corridor must be initiated and followed through by an independent entity other than neighborhood staff. This group should focus on manageable segments of the corridor and start implementing improvements on a smaller scale that fits with the overall theme of 38th Street.

II. INTRODUCTION

Minneapolis, a city of about 370,000 people, is divided into 81 different neighborhoods, seven of which contain parts of East 38th Street. A Market Study of Neighborhood Commercial Areas and Nodes for the city of Minneapolis was prepared in June 1996, for the Minneapolis Community Development Agency (also referred to as the Chiodo Study). The Chiodo Study provided guidelines used to evaluate development proposals by developers or neighborhood groups. The study analyzed neighborhood commercial areas and decided that only three of the 57 commercial areas had healthy intersections. Overall, the Chiodo Study concluded that there are more commercial nodes than neighborhoods can support.¹

However, my study confirms the findings of other neighborhood-driven studies, such as the Spoonheim study, which examined nodes in Powderhorn Park, which questioned these claims. It is possible to create viable commercial nodes again. By creating viable nodes along 38th Street, the overall appeal of the street will improve as both business owners and residents begin to take more pride in where they live. The seven neighborhoods along 38th Street have and are taking a proactive position and are determined to seek out help and funds to revitalize their neighborhood commercial centers.

Once a thriving commercial district along the streetcar line, East 38th Street is now a mix of abandoned and unsightly storefronts in some areas, and thriving and unique commercial nodes in others. In between one finds housing of varying quality. At one point in time neighborhoods had small commercial intersections or nodes where residents shopped, banked, visited the pharmacy, and met with their neighbors. Now, most consumers drive automobiles to shopping centers where megastores can provide them with everything they need. Still, these commercial nodes are vital to many neighborhoods. For non-car users, having shops close by is essential. Thirty-eighth Street offers many positive things to the community, like interesting affordable housing, unique goods and services, the attractive Bancroft School, and Sabathani Community Center, which holds many community resources. Additionally, many creative efforts have been instigated along 38th Street already, which has fostered some conversation and cooperation, suggesting that an overall strategy of cohesion along the street would be possible.

Some limitations that 38th Street has seen are the complications of developing successful, vibrant, attractive nodes. These hindrances arise because nodes are often located between multiple neighborhood boundaries rather than within them. This arose because neighborhood divisions were determined by old school district boundaries, which now follow major transportation routes where nodes occur. In cities where neighborhood organizations are working on local planning and economic development initiatives, "turf concerns," the difficulty in getting small businesses involved, setting priorities, and outreach to businesses may vary. Some neighborhoods have little focus on these relationships. Lack of coordination may be problematic as business nodes aren't broken down by neighborhoods.

¹ The Economic Research Corporation. "Market Node Study on Neighborhood Commercial Areas and Nodes City of Minneapolis." June 1996 (also called the Chiodo report)

Despite these limitations, neighborhoods along 38th Street already communicate and work together to maintain the aesthetics of some nodes and to recruit new businesses into the area. Along with the business side they also work together in areas such as crime prevention community outreach through the South Minneapolis job fair and housing fair, participation in National Night Out and creating community gardens. This cooperation should be extended to an overall plan and collaboration along all of East 38th Street. Even though streetcars no longer join together the various neighborhoods, the 38th Street bus line runs up and down the corridor; and the street is also a convenient cross-town route for cars.

A. PURPOSE

The study is meant to explain the current state of 38th Street, highlight advantages and challenges to developing a cohesive plan for continued development and improvement of the street and discuss recommendations for change. This research project will lay the groundwork for collaborative efforts to enhance and revitalize the community corridor of East 38th Street, and provide basic information about the businesses and other properties along the street. The goal is to generate greater cooperation among the neighborhoods and businesses along East 38th Street, and to foster an increasing confidence in the corridor's future potential that will encourage both new and existing businesses to invest in it, facilitate organizing, and get the city on board.

First, the study looks at existing reports concerning the 38th Street corridor. Then a survey was created to gain insight into the perceptions of neighborhood leaders, business owners, and residents. Interviews were conducted with the city to gain their perspectives. One thing became clear: no unified vision of 38th Street currently exists. The question: "is 38th Street indeed a commercial corridor?" was met with conflicting responses. Aside from the different ways they describe the street, discrepancies also arose in the visions that different people had for the future of 38th Street. So, 38th Street needs a united vision as well as a "plan."

B. CURRENT STATUS OF 38th STREET

Thirty-eighth Street is a difficult street to categorize. Walking along 38th Street one notices a variety of small businesses, numerous homes, community services, and churches. Also evident is the difference in the economic situation of certain areas. From Nicollet Avenue all the way to the Mississippi River, 38th Street passes through seven different neighborhoods. Many times neighborhood boundaries end on one side of the street or, in the case of 38th Street and Chicago Avenue, four different neighborhoods all share one intersection. Although some may feel that due to the nature of 38th Street the City of Minneapolis and neighborhood organizations have had difficulty in coming up with an overall plan and designation of this corridor, this is not true. The problem is it just hasn't been tried yet.

Although 38th Street seems consistent with the definition of a commercial corridor, it is not treated as one or described that way by the city, or even residents. "The Handbook for Navigating through the Commercial Corridor Process" defines a commercial corridor as one of Minneapolis' primary commercial arteries, which historically served as a streetcar route and traditionally have been seen by neighborhoods as boundaries separating one neighborhood from another. Today these commercial corridors are predominately mixed-use arteries, many of which are undergoing economic and social transition. Lake Street, Broadway, Central, and Nicollet Avenues are all examples of commercial corridors in Minneapolis.² Thirty-eighth Street is consistent with this description as it once was traveled by streetcars and is currently a mixed-use artery having a variety of small businesses and a couple industry plants as well as many homes. Thirty-eighth Street deserves the same effort and financing as other corridors and needs it to secure the transition.

Generally, the walk down 38th Street is not aesthetically pleasing. The feeling is that of a residential street with random commercial buildings splattered in. Beginning at Nicollet Avenue and working east towards the Mississippi River, many changes take place along the corridor. For the most part the street is filled with concrete and little greenery except for a few intersections like 38th Street and Fourth Avenue and 38th Street and 12th Avenue. Murals along the street help to add color such as the one on the back of a dentist's building just east of 38th Street and First Avenue. The bigger business nodes are at 38th Street and Nicollet Avenue, 38th Street and Fourth Avenue, 38th Street and Chicago Avenue, 38th Street and Bloomington Avenue, 38th Street and Cedar Avenue, 38th Street and 23rd to 24th Avenue, 38th Street and 27th to 28th Avenue, 38th Street and Minnehaha Avenue, and 38th Street and 42nd Avenue. Once you pass about 35th Avenue and head toward the Mississippi River, the homes along the street get progressively nicer and the street is lined with trees, which leads to a more comfortable feel.

² Lukermann, Barbara, Deb Martin, and Maria Zimmerman, CURA (Center for Urban and Regional Affairs). "The Handbook for Navigating through the Commercial Corridor Process." June 1996.

C. KEY DEFINITIONS:

Neighborhood

The city defined what a neighborhood was many years ago and has been updating it ever since. The way they see neighborhoods as of 1995 is to "describe the basic sub-division of the community. Typically, a neighborhood covers an area, which can logically be served by one elementary school. The term 'neighborhood' is meant to apply to predominantly residential areas, though servicing institutions, schools and businesses serving day-to-day needs are included within neighborhood boundaries. The term may also be applied to such intensive, special use areas as industrial, commercial, and institutional districts."³

Neighborhood node

Neighborhood nodes for this study are specific to central cities except for those with extremely high-density areas. At nodes, business activity is centered around an intersection of two streets, without adjoining commercial uses between more than two intersections. They also provide a service to the surrounding neighborhood and are sometimes a collaboration of businesses that've joined into a business association (38th and Cedar) or a task force (38th and Chicago). The vitality of these nodes are tied directly to the amount of funding resources they have access to through both the city and neighborhood organizations, who at times provide matching improvement grants.

Commercial corridor

Among Minneapolis' primary commercial arteries, commercial corridors historically served as a streetcar routes and traditionally have been seen by neighborhoods as boundaries separating one neighborhood from another. Today these commercial corridors are predominately mixed-use arteries, many of which are undergoing economic and social transition. Lake Street, Broadway, Central, and Nicollet Avenues are all examples of commercial corridors in Minneapolis.⁴

Destination businesses

These businesses draw in people from outside the immediate area to shop at a specific store and are not necessarily dependent on other businesses in the node to help draw in business. Examples along 38th Street include Vintage Music and Zuehlke Advertising.

³ City of Minneapolis Planning Commission. "Minneapolis Communities: Their Definition and Purpose". Publication No. 107, Neighborhood Series No. 4. May 1959. Updated August 28, 1995.

⁴ Lukermann, Barbara, et. al.

III. STUDY METHODOLOGY

The goal is to make the transition of improving 38th Street go more smoothly, and the best it can be as determined by neighborhoods, residents and businesses. This study is an attempt to determine how future developments and changes to 38th can and should be undertaken. The basis of the study was to determine the overall vision (if any) that residents, businesses and neighborhoods have regarding the hope of 38th Street. Existing reports and studies previously conducted for parts of 38th Street, including other NPCR reports that discuss economic development, were applied as a foundation for this 38th Street Corridor Study. No comprehensive study for 38th Street existed, so this study had to start from scratch in some areas.

I conducted 27 interviews with business owners, residents, active neighborhood members and city officials in order to gather empirical information, attitudes and perceptions of the area. I also walked and observed the street, attended neighborhood and business association meetings, interviewed all neighborhoods involved, selected key businesses, and residents to interview. I also used the Internet, the Southside Directory, neighborhood leaders, and the Yellow Pages to gather a preliminary listing of businesses. I used sources suggested by neighborhood staff and residents, and those I found by walking down 38th Street, attempting to reach at least one business at each intersection and residents from each neighborhood. The type of retail and service business reported was based primarily on signs and observations. The vacant space includes space that is clearly vacant as well as space that appeared to be used only for storage. Street addresses are those appearing on the building or found from a directory. Although the number of interviews may seem low, more general conclusions can be drawn from them because the interviews were done by tapping into key residents, businesses and associations that have a feel for the broader area. By gaining the knowledge from these various entities and associations I was able to gather information in a more economical fashion.

IV. GENERAL TRENDS

CHALLENGES TO DEVELOPMENT ON 38th STREET

1. Challenges to businesses along 38th Street

Concerns from those interviewed include:

- Competition is significant at various nearby commercial areas. Lake and Nicollet, Lake and Chicago, 48th and Chicago, and other north-south streets have significant concentrations of businesses that serve area residents drawing business away from 38th Street.
- Storefront churches and other non-retail entities. Although they provide spiritual benefits, churches do not contribute to the economic strength of a commercial area. The considerable amount of space occupied by non-retail uses and the amount of vacant space are all indications that there is more space in neighborhood commercial centers than can be supported by the retail market demand.

2. Challenges to 38th Street

According to Spoonheim there are certain challenges to 38th Street:⁵

- Vacancy (and boarded-up housing and businesses). Vacancy, either real or perceived, hurts the vibrancy of a street. Perceived vacancy is an issue when a building is used for storage or infrequent activities during business hours (i.e. a storefront church) so that a passerby will not see any activity and thus assume it is vacant. Perceived vacant buildings are often less attractive: they lack window displays, lights, and people welcoming customers. Storage needs are great for some businesses, but a successful node must find a way to prevent street-front storage. Thirty-eighth Street has a handful of vacant buildings and even more that appear to be empty. Currently the market fails to redevelop this space. Overall, this decreases the appeal of the street to both businesses and residents.
- Public Space. Neighborhoods need gathering places, especially locations where residents have vested interest in preserving a specific atmosphere. Businesses that incorporate local art, sponsor neighborhood activities, hire residents, etc. increase the investment of residents. Public facilities such as libraries can be an important space as well. Public space is difficult to measure, but can be observed in people interacting in non-business transactions, local art being posted, the lack of vandalism or trash, and other factors.
- Related Services. A node with related businesses that attract customers who use multiple services at the node are generally more vibrant. Crossover customers increase economic activity by direct purchases and through creating a welcoming feeling on the street.

⁵ Spoonheim, Joel B. "Neighborhood Commercial Nodes: Appropriate Criteria for Evaluating Potential Public Investment A Plan B Paper." 17 May 1998 and Spoonheim, Joel. "Powderhorn Park Neighborhood Node Study." Oct. 1997.

- Non-node Commercial Space. Many streets have commercial space located away from nodes mixed in with residential uses. Non-node or scatter-site commercial space is the result of continued use spot zoning. Spot zoning allows areas originally zoned residential to be used for nonresidential purposes. Scatter-site uses are identifiable from city planning maps specifying building use. The existence of active commercial space away from nodes may suggest the existence of sufficient market demand for services offered at a node, though in most cases there was no duplication. Instead, such developments continued to exist because of the low property cost, which was beneficial to the businesses. As non-node commercial space becomes available, continuation of spot-zoning approvals (or conditional-use permits) by municipal agencies prevents increasing the concentration for activity at nodes. Nodes will be more viable if customers are not attracted away to other locations.

The Chiodo Report identifies these general challenges to development along 38th Street:⁶

- Lack of strong major anchors. Anchors such as supermarkets and drug stores are important to neighborhood-oriented commercial areas because they attract the largest number of customers on a regular basis and have the potential, in many cases, to attract customers from outside the immediate neighborhood. If residents are forced to leave their neighborhoods regularly for groceries and drugstore items, market support for other uses will decrease significantly.
- Supermarket. Supermarkets or smaller full-line grocery stores have long been the primary anchor of successful neighborhood shopping centers or shopping areas. The increased number and size of warehouse food stores such as Rainbow and Cub that serve large community-wide or regional trade areas are attracting an increasing share of food-store dollars. Discount department stores and warehouse clubs continue to offer an increasing number of nonperishable grocery items, including new pantry sections in K-Mart stores. Target, Wal-Mart, and K-Mart, are also developing new super stores that add a large grocery section to their normal discount department stores. An increasing number of neighborhood commercial areas in Minneapolis and in the suburbs will be forced to figure out how to survive without the benefit of a supermarket anchor. Thirty-eighth Street must find an alternate anchor or more fully support the new co-op idea at 38th Street and Fourth Avenue in order to keep customers in the area.
- Drug Store. The neighborhood drug store, also a key anchor, continues to face increased competition in the prescription drug business. Discount department stores including Target, Wal-Mart, and Kmart often have pharmacies, which offer at least some drugs at discount prices. All of these provide additional competition to neighborhood drug stores. Competition is also beginning to develop from the health and beauty aids portion of these businesses and mail-order drug companies, reimbursement policies from HMOs provide little profit for drug stores, with independent neighborhood stores having little bargaining power.
- Banks. Bank or savings-and-loan offices have historically been located in many larger neighborhood commercial areas or nodes. They provide a wide range of

⁶ The Economic Research Corporation. "Market Node Study on Neighborhood Commercial Areas and Nodes City of Minneapolis." June 1996 (also called the Chiodo report)

financial services to neighborhood residents and attract customers, which provide complementary market support to other nearby businesses. The offices also have a significant number of employees who are potential customers of nearby restaurants and other nearby retail businesses. The increased availability of automated teller machines (ATMs) in grocers, drug stores, and office buildings, along with direct-deposit programs, have greatly reduced the need for many customers to go to the bank and has encouraged most banks to reduce the number of their full-service branch offices. Thirty-eighth Street has no banks and if these trends continue, recruiting one will be difficult. Due to the lack of traditional anchors, neighborhoods along 38th Street must be creative in exploring other avenues to attract customers to business nodes.

- Business site. Availability of good sites is an important factor in determining the potential for new retail development. Often, suitable sites can be provided only if the commercial area is extended into a portion of the surrounding residential area. The residents of many neighborhoods do not like the change in the character of a commercial area, which occurs when parking is placed in front of retail businesses, and do not like to demolish homes for commercial activities. Yet, the scattering of neighborhood retail uses over the much larger number of commercial areas results in many small weak centers that can provide only a very limited share of the goods and services needed or desired by neighborhood residents. Instead of so many small areas, a larger, more concentrated retail area would better serve many neighborhoods, providing a wider range of the goods and services needed and desired by area residents. One of the strongest principles of retail development is that there is a positive synergy that results from concentrating complementary businesses. This permits businesses to take advantage of the market draw of the other businesses.

Additional concerns raised by those interviewed:

- Property Values. Property values at nonviable nodes are so low that rents may attract start-up businesses, which often leave quickly and are not promptly replaced. These short-term uses create a false sense that there is a strong market for the commercial space. These businesses could be better educated before making this decision and neighborhoods should work with new businesses so this doesn't happen.
- Highways. The growth of the metro-wide highway system facilitated the movement of shoppers to many other locations other than downtown and the neighborhoods. The smaller commercial properties and buildings in these neighborhood locations were not only aging, but also often becoming inefficient and functionally obsolete with inadequate loading facilities, storage areas and, most importantly, inadequate, if any, off-street parking.
- Relocation. Moving a successful business to a better nearby location has high costs. Often one or two successful businesses at an otherwise nonviable node remain because moving to the more vibrant node five blocks away costs too much. Many residents of the neighborhoods surrounding the commercial areas would like to have new retail development and still retain the existing character of the commercial area. In most cases these are incompatible goals, and the neighborhood residents will need to choose one or the other. Halfway measures in resolving this issue may be the

worst of both worlds. Grants from the neighborhoods along 38th Street could help to offset these costs.

- Housing stock. The decaying houses along 38th Street deter new businesses and residents from moving in.
- Security concerns. This factor affects new retail development in many neighborhood commercial areas. Loitering youth also foster this perception. This issue is intensified because many outsiders from other neighborhoods or from the suburbs have little knowledge regarding various neighborhoods and may perceive greater risks than exist. Locations with high activity levels, traffic on the street, off-street parking in front of stores, and good lighting are attractive to new development because those conditions help reduce security concerns. Addressing safety concerns is an important factor in any plans to strengthen or preserve most neighborhood commercial areas.

B. OPPORTUNITIES TO DEVELOP 38th STREET

1. Opportunities to develop businesses along 38th Street

According to the Chiodo Report there are certain opportunities to develop businesses along 38th Street:

- Traffic Volume. High traffic volumes have great potential to contribute to the success of businesses along primary routes, because of the high visibility that business will gain. Additionally, the presence of high traffic volumes increases the feeling of safety for potential customers, particularly those parts of the city where persons from outside the neighborhood may have perceived security concerns. 38th Street has convenient access to both east-west destinations and no barriers to north-south access.

Other opportunities from those interviewed include:

- Restaurants. There has been a strong growth in the Twin Cities and in the nation in the restaurant industry, as many persons spend a higher percentage of their income going out for meals, snacks, and refreshments. There are increased numbers of sit-down, ethnic, fast food, and specialty restaurants, coffee and bagel shops, delicatessens, bakeries, and other types of eating and drinking establishments. The restaurant industry is typified by continual change and naturally leads all other categories of businesses in terms of most start-ups as well as most closings. New strategies come and go and many buildings are recycled with new themes and new names. These restaurant trends are not reflected on 38th Street because there are few nice restaurants along the corridor, and so residents are forced to leave the area for an evening out, and workers must leave to eat lunch. This presents 38th Street with a good opportunity to capitalize on these trends.
- Available Space. There is good underutilized commercial space along 38th Street, which needs to be better maintained and marketed.
- Bikers and Walkers. Making the nodes more bike-friendly with bike racks would help give the street an uplift. This also distinguishes neighborhood nodes from big-box and shopping centers. Thirty-eighth street businesses also have a captive audience with people in the neighborhood who rely on bikes, buses and feet. Perhaps something similar to Uptown's public bike racks might be reasonable to implement. Currently some people who ride bikes to intersections like 38th Street and Chicago Avenue end up locking them to sign posts or other inappropriate places, contributing to the appearance of disorder.

2. Opportunities to develop 38th Street

Spoonheim identifies certain opportunities to develop 38th Street:

- On-Site Property Owners. Higher levels of business owners who own their buildings appear to correlate with greater upkeep of the property and willingness to address node problems. Currently 38th Street has many businesses with on-site property owners.
- Architecture and Aesthetic appeals. The character of a street is a marketing feature. Measuring aesthetic appeal is highly subjective and may not reflect architectural design. Buildings unnotable by architectural standards may be vibrantly painted, creating an atmosphere sought by customers. Character can be measured by looking for unique factors such as construction design, a cluster of similar specialty shops, or a common theme that sets it out from other areas. Aesthetics may also reflect the reinvestment of projects by business owners. Run-down buildings may demonstrate a lack of commitment to the business climate of a node.

Other opportunities from those interviewed include:

- Identity. Currently, there is no common identity along the corridor and there are mixed messages as to what type of street it is. The potential for success is great. Already many neighborhoods are working together and collaborating on smaller projects along the corridor and residents are crossing neighborhood boundaries in certain committees such as the 38th and Chicago Task Force, and in community gardens. When businesses gather for node meetings they already work together with other businesses. Bancroft, Bryant, Central and Powderhorn all contributed NRP dollars to the remodeling of Phelps Park, which is in Bryant, and participated in the Phelps Programming Collaborative, which oversaw the park renovations and continues to work on park programming. Bancroft has initiated the 38th and Chicago Task Force to clean up and improve that intersection. They have elicited the support of the businesses in the immediate vicinity and have inspired an enthusiastic response from many of them. The Bryant Neighborhood Organization initiated efforts to establish a community cooperative grocery store at 38th Street and Fourth Avenue. The co-op board has since become an independent body with representatives from surrounding neighborhoods, mostly Central, Bryant, and Kingfield. Bryant initiated the co-op as a way to revitalize its section of East 38th Street, and has high hopes for additional economic development to follow after the store opens.
- Income Level. The income levels of the trade-area residents are important because that determines their ability to purchase goods and services and have a larger trade area. Higher-income residents tend to make a greater variety of purchases and are often willing to pay more for higher quality or better service. Yet, these residents also have the means to travel out of the area to make purchases. Since the income levels along 38th Street and in the immediate area vary and in some places are low, while others are medium to high, businesses can pull from all income levels. Those without means to travel out of the immediate area are likely to shop at places within walking distance.

- Neighborhood groups can influence what goes where. For example, Bancroft along with help from the MCDA bought the Fina lot, two homes and an abandoned gas station, and tore them down and then rebuilt a house there. This stands in opposition to the nearby barbershop, which was just constructed in Powderhorn Park in the middle of a residential area. More active intervention by neighborhood organizations would be beneficial to creating a smooth feel along 38th Street. Although this may take time, the resources are there and the possibility of slowly re-creating 38th Street does exist.
- Multiple neighborhoods can benefit businesses. By having seven different neighborhoods along 38th Street, new and old businesses may qualify for more grants. For example, Vintage Music received grants from both Powderhorn Park and Bancroft Neighborhoods.
- Some 38th Street nodes have a great deal of business stability. Nodes with long-term businesses generate a reputation for providing certain services and thus attract return customers. For example Nicollet Hardware has been around for many years and has greatly increased the corner of Nicollet and 38th. High turnover discourages customers from returning to a node and most significantly can impact the likelihood of their crossover to other businesses. This has occurred with the east side of the Bloomington and 38th Street intersection with a restaurant going out of businesses.
- Related Services. A node with related businesses that attract customers who use multiple services at the node are generally more vibrant. Crossover customers increase economic activity by direct purchases and through creating a welcoming feeling on the street. One example of this is the café and gift shop on the Northeast corner of 42nd Avenue and 38th Street, which sit across the street from a garden center and movie theater. Their businesses also benefit from the large number of employees and customers at the medical clinic that occupies the fourth corner of this intersection.
- Youth. The youth need more positive activities. The natural abundance of energy the youth have and their desire to "do something" with their time and lives can contribute to 38th Street by helping with murals or clean-up days. This is one of the reasons why the 38th and Chicago Task Force is heading up a "mural competition" to get budding artists a chance to do something positive.
- New terrain. Starting a new project can create excitement and hope for a better community, spurs energy in residents that can transform into neighborhood pride. By starting something on 38th Street it could quickly snowball into something magnificent. For example, if the co-op goes in at 38th Street and Fourth Avenue this could enhance the area.
- Parking. Rather than provide off-street parking in front of buildings along 38th Street, it may be more profitable to provide rear parking lots for several reasons: There are a great number of children traveling along busy intersections and they would be protected, limiting undesirable traffic parked along nodes would make the area look nicer by opening up the node and reduce the perception of clutter.
- Some 38th Street businesses are thriving. Despite the continued growth in the number of discount department stores serving the Twin Cities metro area that carry a variety of hardware store items, and the growth of the big-box home improvement centers such as Menards, Budget Power, Builders Square, and Home Depot, 38th Street's hardware stores are thriving. Both Peterson's and Nicollet Ace draw in many

customers. Ace Nicollet Hardware at 38th and Nicollet recently expanded and the owner reports increased sales as a result of the new look and increased inventory. This is one big advantage to 38th Street where both Nicollet Ace Hardware and Peterson's Hardware Hank are doing well and both bring in customers to their respective nodes.

- Unique businesses give the Street character. Some businesses like Zuelhke Advertising, Everett's Food Market, South Side Farm Store, Oak Tree Furniture, Riverview Theater, garden centers, and Vintage Music are draw businesses and bring in customers from all over.
- Business associations. Businesses coordinate efforts and money with the MCDA in order to improve their business area.
- Large institutional businesses. The Fairview Medical Clinic, Nile Health Care Center, and industrial businesses at Hiawatha are likely to have resources that a corridor-wide project could tap into.

V. ANALYSIS of CURRENT MAJOR NODES on 38th STREET

Beginning at Nicollet Avenue and moving East to the Mississippi, 38th Street passes through the neighborhoods of Kingfield, Bryant, Central, Powderhorn Park, Bancroft, Standish, and Longfellow. The following is a brief description of the major nodes along the street beginning with Nicollet Avenue and working towards the river.

Nicollet Avenue and 38th Street

The Nicollet Avenue and 38th Street intersection is on the far northeast corner of the Kingfield neighborhood. This is the area many residents and neighborhood activists would like to fix up because perception of crime is high, according to Kingfield director Sara Linnes Robinson. The improvements to Ace Hardware have helped the area greatly, but the rest of the intersection could use a face-lift. This intersection has heavy traffic coming from both Nicollet Avenue and 38th Street.

Fourth Avenue and 38th Street

The intersection of 38th Street and Fourth Avenue has a good and underutilized retail site on the southwest corner. It is in the heart of the Bryant and Central neighborhoods. The Minneapolis Urban League, Sabathani Community Center (housing numerous community organizations), fire station, and other noncommercial organizations are located at the intersection or close by, attracting additional traffic to the area and bringing in many neighborhood residents. Currently a group of concerned residents and neighborhood leaders are working on a co-op grocery store to replace the 38th Street Food Market. There is no main grocery store along 38th Street, although superettes and convenience stores like Cup Foods, Tom Thumb, SuperAmericia, and others fill the gap in the immediate area.

Chicago Avenue and 38th Street⁷

Roughly 15,000 vehicles pass by this intersection daily in a single direction. This intersection borders one of the poorest neighborhoods in Minneapolis. Vacancy is perceived as high due to three buildings on the northwest side used as storage or church space. In addition, the building on the southeast corner has windows on Chicago, but the 38th Street side of the store is relatively unmarked. Some businesses hold irregular hours, which hurts activity flowing in and out of storefronts. The 38th Street Task Force with members from the four surrounding neighborhoods has been working to decrease the perception of crime in the area and improve the aesthetics of the corner, but perception is that it is still a very dangerous intersection. The neighborhood-based businesses draw significant bus and pedestrian traffic because many residents do not use automobiles. Local residents are heavily dependent on bus routes that intersect at the node and for convenience and other businesses that are within walking distance.

There is currently too much commercial space available at the node for what can be sustained, but this is partly a result of significant spot zoning along both major streets and the presence of multiple buildings used for storage. These factors decrease the

⁷ Spoonheim, Joel B., some data on the nodes in Powderhorn Park (Chicago and 38th, Bloomington and 38th and Cedar and 38th) were taken from both reports by Spoonheim.

economic activity of the node by diverting potential customers elsewhere and by supporting a perception of an abandoned, dangerous area.

The surrounding area is considered to be tough by many, a reputation earned the summer of 1996 when over 60 shootings took place. The crime rate has significantly dropped with increased neighborhood cleanup programs and police presence; with time the perception may catch up with the new reality.

If all the scattered development along Chicago Avenue was concentrated at the node, the vibrancy could be restored and more residents might frequent the area. The critical challenge is to identify businesses that could move easily to the area, and fill the vacant spaces. Neighborhood residents and the 38th and Chicago Task force have started working on this to draw people to the area and identify the need to decrease crime and the perception thereof.

Bloomington Avenue and 38th Street

Roughly 14,000 vehicles pass by this intersection daily. There is minimal crime here and a good perception of the area. Peterson's Hardware store and Kevin's Amoco gas station are here along with the Southside Farm Store, which needs additional space. Bloomington Avenue is sandwiched between Cedar and Chicago, two avenues with heavier north-south traffic. The amount of east-west traffic along 38th Street is relatively constant at each intersection, but the Bloomington-38th node is overshadowed by Cedar Avenue. In addition, there is a large strip-mall development two blocks further south on Bloomington. The result is that this intersection, while currently being home to a number of strong and demanded businesses, is caught in a location that will struggle to compete over the long term. Without Peterson's this node would quickly deteriorate. This is a case where it may be a good idea to move the couple vibrant businesses to another node (i.e. Cedar and 38th) and redevelop the property for residential use. This could be done by a tax on vacant properties and an even higher tax rate for abandoned gas stations. For now, Peterson's has developed deep connections with people in the immediate area and have a committed customer base.

Cedar Avenue and 38th Street

Cedar and 38th Street is one of the busiest intersections identified by MCDA citywide. Roughly 21,000 vehicles pass daily (this number only accounts for north- and eastbound trips, assuming that trips in the opposite direction are returning vehicles). Lots of residential space is spot-zoned as commercial buildings along Cedar Avenue. Nonnode commercial space is heavy along Cedar. The business association put up a destination sign on southwest corner and additional lighting that improved the after-dark atmosphere and drew attention to its presence. The projection for Cedar and 38th is for a strong future. The location is unique for capturing both regional customers (commuters) traveling along Cedar and local customers who drive along 38th Street, and this geographic position will help sustain the node. One critical issue is parking for businesses on Cedar north of 38th Street that do not have off-street parking. During rush hour no storefront parking is allowed.

This node is very strong due to a mix of businesses that serve local and regional interests and an active business association committed to improving the area. The vacant building on the northwest corner was purchased for rehabilitation for a specialty shop

(78-rpm records) that attracts customers from around the world. The grocery store is one of the premier meat delis in Minneapolis. While some of the buildings have few customers because they are used for light industry and studio space, they are well kept. The node has space for further development in currently under-used buildings, which will further enhance the market.

Some of the buildings are deteriorating; exterior facades have been neglected or treated inexpensively or without concern for individual appearance or area-wide cohesiveness. The area-wide lighting is inadequate and exterior business signage and signage for parking sites are inadequate and confusing. Existing off-street parking is often not visible to the customers or is used for long periods by employees or business operators. Parking space availability is often reduced by long-term litter or piling of snow in the wintertime. There is a perception by some persons that these neighborhood commercial areas, such as 38th and Cedar, are unsafe, especially at night. As personal safety becomes a bigger issue, the perception of lack of security increases.

This intersection also has a convenient relationship to nearby residential communities. There is a high level of stability and home ownership and the availability of housing for young families can result in increasing and improving customer base. There is also a high density of surrounding residents as an employment base. The business properties themselves are an asset. There are a number of owner-occupied businesses and many are in decent physical condition, and there is a presence of some destination businesses that draw customers from considerably farther than surrounding neighborhoods. There is also physical space for public area improvements like the sidewalk width and building setbacks, which offer unique opportunities to provide public and private improvements to enhance the public areas. Once again a new attitude must be ingrained through promotion, marketing and simply providing more complete goods and services.

23rd Avenue and 38th Street

This intersection contains Nile Heath Care, which is the largest employer in the area and could have a huge impact. It also has one of the few parking lots and restaurants (Casalenda's) in the area. Between 22nd to 24th there is quite a strip of businesses along 38th street. This is a major business area and yet only parts of the area are fully developed. Along the South side of 38th street there is a possibility to do some façade improvements and perhaps combine some of the storefronts into a more fluid combination. This is a long-time neighborhood node and has many years of development and neighborhood history.

42nd Avenue and 38th Street

The 42nd and 38th Street node lies in a more upscale neighborhood. They have a coffee shop, movie theater, garden center and a gift store on this corner. This area appears to be busy throughout the day, drawing from the unique businesses. Here is one of the few businesses that are gathering spots along 38th Street: the Riverview Cafe. This area is highly developed and has a genuinely nice feel to it. More nodes could work to combine certain storefronts like Amy Kristine's and the coffee shop did. The garden center here is an older established business.

Nonnode businesses

These businesses are still a vital part of 38th Street even though they do not lie at major intersections. Some of these successful businesses include Dairy Queen, the South Side Farm Store, Oak Tree Furniture, and Naaman's, the new barbershop. Some of these businesses like the South Side Farm Store are quite successful and don't need to have the draw of other businesses around them. Yet, for some businesses off of nodes they can actually pull customers away from the nodes. It would seem that for some smaller businesses to be a benefit for everyone, they should relocate into vacant commercial spots at business nodes. This would also help the flow of certain long residential strips.

Nonbusiness Highlights

Other pleasant attributes to 38th Street include the community garden at 38th Street and 12th Avenue, Bancroft School, Phelps Park, Sabathani Community Center and churches.

VI. INTERVIEW SUMMARIES

The questions I asked Residents were:

1. What are the three best things about living in your neighborhood?
2. What are the three biggest concerns you have living in your neighborhood?
3. Do you shop along 38th Street and how do you travel along 38th Street?
4. What businesses do you think are lacking (ie. banks, grocery stores, doctors)?
5. What would you like to see added to 38th Street?
6. What would you like to see subtracted from 38th Street?
7. Are you active in your neighborhood association?
8. Which businesses do you have problems with and why?
9. What do you think are the best businesses and why?
10. How do you find out about businesses on 38th Street?
11. What do you think neighborhoods and the city of Minneapolis could do to help 38th Street?
12. Would you be willing to cooperate with others to better 38th Street?
13. How invested are you as a homeowner to 38th Street?
14. Other comments:

The residents I spoke to were:

1. Rich McMartin, 10-year resident of the Bryant Neighborhood at the 3800 block of Fifth Avenue.
2. Jacque Passow of the Bancroft Neighborhood at 3800 block of 11th Avenue, eight-year resident. She works on the community garden at 38th Street and 12th Avenue, which started as a block club project through block grant money from CCP/Safe.
3. Sid Korpi of the Powderhorn Park Neighborhood at the 3800 block of Elliot Avenue.
4. Marshall James (38th and Chicago Task Force member, president of BNA this year, and his third year on the council) at the 4000 block of Chicago.
5. Willie Robinson Jr. (BNA council and 38th and Chicago Task Force member and resident) at the 4000 block of Eliot.
6. Tom Daniels of the Standish Neighborhood. He is a resident, and was chair of the SENA marketing council, and is now a board member.
7. June Harmon of the Powderhorn Park Neighborhood at the 3800 block of Bloomington Avenue.
8. Steve Brandt of the Kingfield Neighborhood at 39th and Pleasant. He is a cochair of the grocery co-op board for 38th Street and Fourth Avenue and a writer for the *Star Tribune*. He is also actively promoting 40th Street as a potential bicycle greenway.
9. Sharon Parker, formerly of the Bryant, now in Longfellow. She contributes to the *Southside Pride*, and has participated in various neighborhood activities. She lives at the 4100 block of Snelling Avenue.

Benefits

Of the nine residents I interviewed, the best things about living in their neighborhood included:

- Central location, closeness to downtown and parks, and reverse commute to almost everywhere; close to freeway and work, lakes, airport, downtown, Uptown, bus, schools. (8 residents)
- Sense of neighborhood, friends, community and unity. These residents say they know more people that they did in the suburbs and they say that they have a great artistic community and that people in the area are smart, savvy, open minded, and diversely talented. (5 residents)
- One resident enjoys the natural beauty like the parks, and neighbors cultivating their yards, old-growth trees, and welcoming colors; while another mentioned the bus service because when he first moved into the neighborhood he didn't have a car; and one resident mentioned the affordability in general.
- Affordability of homes (3 residents).

Concerns

- Crime including crack houses and break-ins, car thefts, drugs (this has been hard to prove since there needs to be proof for conviction), gangs, gunfire and domestic violence (7 residents)
- Little annoyances like loud parties, traffic noise, loud radios from cars and obnoxious neighbors (4 residents)
- Lack of respect that some residents have for where they live possibly due in part to owners versus renters, saying that this attitude grows "like a virus" (3 residents)
- Airport noise, which has increased with runway work (3 residents)
- Vacant and boarded homes (3 residents)
- Also mentioned were: blight, poverty, litter on the streets, schools (sometimes a dumping ground for students who have had problems elsewhere), flight of the middle class, problem areas like the recessed doorway by Wreck Brothers where one woman said people smoke crack, and "dysfunctional" parents

Mode of Travel

- Cars (9 Residents)
- Bus (5 Residents)
- Walk (2 Residents)

There are some dangerous intersections, where cars have been hit and parents are worried about children crossing, especially Cedar and 38th Street. Overall this is not a pedestrian/bicycle friendly area, and Tom Daniel admits that it doesn't feel safe. There is no boulevard (it was ripped up about 30 years ago) so now there's nothing to protect people from the street except for the parked cars, which serve as a barrier. There is no identification for bikes or to determine if the road is two or one lane. The road quality is also poor and lighting needs to be improved. There is no sense of ownership except for isolated areas like Cedar Avenue to Hiawatha Avenue where some spots feel owned. Traffic calming effects might help, yet business owners like Juleen Lynd of Nicollet Hardware doesn't want anything to hinder traffic flow for fear it will hurt business.

Having clearly marked lines for parking and biking would help make the street more pedestrian friendly. Trees would help to break down the horizontal image of the street and make it feel more secure.

Shopping

When residents were asked if they shopped along 38th Street, their answers varied from yes to not really. They did admit that there were a few shops they frequented including Nicollet Hardware, South Side Farm Store, Clyde's Auto, Mother Earth Gardens, and convenience stores. The reason why they don't shop often along 38th Street is because they can find better deals at stores like Cub and Rainbow Foods and at larger shopping areas. The residents complained that the prices are too high on 38th Street, which could be in part to the need of business owners to compensate for theft.

New Businesses Respondents said they would like to see:

- Grocery store or food co-op (4 residents)
- Small restaurants that include healthful food (4 residents)
- Coffee shop (5 residents)
- More gathering, not loitering, places (2 residents)
- Florist (2 residents) (Already there are two florists along 38th Street. This helps demonstrate the need for better marketing and an increased knowledge base for residents in the immediate area.)
- Other businesses that residents would like include a wine-and-cheese shop, bread shop, video store, bank, drugstore, Cheapo records, professionals like chiropractors/CPAs, book store, antiques, hardware store, and a clothing store. There is a real pent-up demand for a nice place where people bring friends that draws people in and spurs reinvestment. High crime is a deterrent and by bringing in stores with a lot of cash transactions the problem increases. Residents appreciate locally owned business and personal attention.

Additions

Aside from new businesses all of the residents would like to see beautification along the street. This would include trees, planters, decorative lighting, anything that would add color and art, banners like on Bloomington and Lake Street that lift people's spirits, and more flower gardens like the one on 12th Avenue and 38th Street. The garden has gotten positive feedback from other areas of Minneapolis, according to Jacque Passow, who heads up the garden. Thirty-eighth street needs an overall streetscape plan and to revamp pavement. This would help to change the feel of the street to a more laid-back grass-roots area. It would also make the area more inviting. Two residents would like to see an increase in police presence, especially at 38th Street and Chicago and one resident would like to see speed bumps or something done to slow down traffic. Some people stay in their homes for fear of shootings, and some feel crime is migrating from the Phillips neighborhood and the landlords will rent to anyone. Residents want to see more residents involved in cleaning up the neighborhoods. Help for low-income people to buy homes and businesses would be a great asset.

Subtractions

Residents would like to remove "trashy" convenience stores (Portland Foods and the grocery store at Fourth Avenue and 38th Street were named), which attract crime. One resident's daughter saw a man leave Portland Foods in a car and pull a gun and shoot at a house. Several shootings and deaths have occurred at 38th Street and Fourth Avenue. Other complaints include: litter, crime, threatening and inhospitable environment, traffic going too fast, fire engines making loud noise, Cup Foods, boarded-up stores, drug traffic, graffiti, and the vacant spot at 24th Avenue and 38th Street. They would also like a moratorium on auto repairs and to spruce up Steve's Warehouse at Hiawatha. The area seems to be sending mixed messages by the juxtaposition of boarded-up stores and eyesores with well-maintained houses. Sid Korpi, who's house was once targeted by graffiti, has decided to fight back in an unusual way by painting all the blank space on her house in the hope that these "artists" will respect her house more.

Involvement in the Neighborhood

All of the residents were and are vary active in their neighborhoods.

- Rich McMartin is the chair of the Bryant Issues Committee dealing with problem properties and safety. He is also starting a walking patrol group for Bryant. He goes to the 3rd Precinct Police Advisory Committee (3-PAC) for Bryant and he helps during clean-up days when they happen.
- Jacque Passow from the Bancroft Neighborhood was a block leader for five years, has spent one year on the board, has helped to start the Meridian Garden and this is her third year working on the garden. She restarted the Crime, Safety and Livability Committee, which has been going on since the middle of 1998.
- Sid Korpi from Powderhorn Park was a block leader, proofs grants and newsletters, works with home-based businesses and is an enterprise facilitator for South Minneapolis Collaborative.
- Marshall James is the President of the Bancroft neighborhood association and active with the 38th and Chicago Task Force.
- Willie Robinson Jr. is also active with the Chicago Task Force; and a resident.
- June Harmon from Powderhorn Park is on the board of directors and co-chair of the economic development committee and co-founder of Powderhorn Park home-based businesses.
- Steve Brandt chairs the co-op marketing committee, has served two terms on the Kingfield board and started up the 40th Street greenway. He comments that there are problems with pedestrian biking along 38th Street, because of high traffic and little to protect bikers from the street.
- Sharon Parker was an active volunteer in Bryant and is an advisor on this study.

Problem Businesses

The major problem businesses include: 38th and Portland grocery store (suspected of criminal activity and was closed for a while), 38th and Fourth grocery store (unkept and boarded window), three residents complained about Cup Foods (rumors of drugs and spoiled food) at Chicago and 38th Street, which they claim is a scary place and an attraction for loiterers; South Side Farm Store (unclean and crowded) and Good Times (reportedly shut down due to drugs).

Favorite Businesses

- SuperAmerica at 38th and Chicago makes donations to neighborhood functions and also helps to keep the corner clean (2 Residents)
- Cup Foods donates as well.
- Nicollet Hardware has made many improvements and has become a good supplier of home improvement goods. One resident commented he would pay extra not to drive to Home Depot.
- Clyde's Auto (2 Residents)
- Peterson's Hardware, except one wishes Peterson's would have lumber (3 Residents)
- Dairy Queen (2 Residents)
- Other businesses mentioned include: Cedar Small Engine Repair, Tomorrows Trendz, Wreck Brothers, Mattress Liquidators, Golden Frame, Ace Hardware, South Side Farm, Hot Plate to Go, Candy Jar, Everett's, and the Basket Barn (which is now closed).

Advertising

When asked how they found out about businesses along 38th Street, several residents reported that they were referred to businesses by friends, four residents found out by driving by, and others found businesses by walking by, reading about them in newsletters, the *Southside Pride*, the *Spokesman*, *Insight*, or in the business directories for Standish and Ericsson. Jacque Passow likes to support businesses that contribute to community activities and she writes about them in *The Banner* (newsletter for Bancroft) and includes names of supporters in her articles in the hopes that other businesses will jump on the bandwagon. Sid Korpi also makes a conscious effort to keep money in the community.

Suggestions for the Neighborhoods and the City

The residents had some interesting ideas about what neighborhoods and the City of Minneapolis could do to help out 38th Street.

- Rich McMartin of Bryant believed that businesses could take a few risks and locate on 38th Street. The city could cooperate with the neighborhoods nearest a proposed business site and change zoning to commercial where it would help the neighbors.
- Jacque Passow of Bancroft believes neighborhoods should not turn their backs, but should instead get involved. She also mentioned that police need to be supportive and break up suspicious looking groups; supply person-power to the area.
- Sid Korpi from Powderhorn Park wants the place better lit. The entrepreneur group she works with needs more support and exposure. This organization runs entrepreneurs through enterprise facilitators first, and they get a team of support before they receive funding (grants). The city and neighborhoods could work more closely on projects like this. Korpi would also like more community gardens, banners, and revitalization like Lake and Franklin. She agrees with Passow and would like to beef up police patrol. She gets jaded when the media blows up the "Evil City" and wishes this perception to change.
- Marshall James and Willie Robinson Jr. from Bancroft want the city to help get rid of gangs and drugs and clean up the areas where drugs are sold in public. They believe

that stability will lead to comfort and then businesses will be attracted to the area. The police department and legal system need to be more involved in the community by putting out more cars, foot patrol, increasing visibility, so people know they're being watched. Willie is a probation patrol officer for Powderhorn and believes that that neighborhood association does much and gives grant money. James and Robinson want businesses to follow city ordinances and abide by the law, like not selling cigarettes to minors, and take ownership of their business. They are upset that 38th Street and Chicago Avenue has been deemed obsolete by the city of Minneapolis.

- Tom Daniel from Standish comments that there is only one business association, at 38th Street and Cedar Avenue, but not at other nodes. This is one of the new goals for SENA's NRP plans. They are wondering what impact light-rail transit will have when it is completed in about 2003. They expect that the proposed stop at 38th Street and Hiawatha will increase both bus traffic and pedestrian flow, which has both positive and negative implications. Daniel believes "it's all about relationships." Daniel believes this area has a tradition of "making do" and residents and businesses need to stand up and not take it anymore. They could be empowered and business and neighborhood associations need to reach out.
- June Harmon wants more research on what is actually on 38th street and to find out what is lacking. She sees 38th Street as a basic cross street but is often bypassed by Lake Street or 46th Street. She wants more collaboration with neighborhoods because she feels many stick to themselves.
- Steve Brandt wants the neighborhoods to be helped with more police calls being handled by neighborhood committees, which know what's going on. He wants a strategy developed to target crack houses and enforcement actions to deal with problem landlords. The strength of natural leaders should be cultivated in the community. There should be more walk patrols and plantings on vacant lots. He thinks that NRP should work more with nonprofits and churches, those that already have services and "know-how" in certain areas, and the neighborhoods could piggyback off them. He thinks there needs to be a show of commitment that Lake Street Partners gave to Lake Street rather than treating 38th Street as a boundary.
- Sharon Parker would like financial support of the co-op at 38th Street and Fourth and technical and marketing support for small businesses and consulting services. She would like information to be disseminated to businesses on how to present their storefront for customer appeal as well as safety.

Cooperation

All of the residents are willing to cooperate with others to better 38th Street. Some are already working together. The concern is that they don't want any more community meetings. James' (president of the BNA), goal is to get people to work together.

How invested?

All of the residents were invested as homeowners.

- Rich McMartin has put a lot of sweat equity into the neighborhood in general and into his home in particular. He feels that Bryant is on the mend and that there are a lot of folks here that want to make the area better. He puts his dedication this way: if he

won the \$100,000 Powerball prize he would still stay here, if he won the \$195,000,000 he would leave. It may sound like a silly measure of his loyalty to the neighborhood but he thinks it's probably fairly true.

- Jacque Passow bought a house five years ago with the idea that she wanted to fix it up and move out to the country for a private and peaceful place, but she's committed to the area now and she comments that she even spends Christmas and Easter with her neighbors.
- Sid Korpi is hugely committed to the neighborhood as she bought her house and transformed it. She says it ups the ante when it's your home.
- June Harmon hopes to be here another 30 years.
- Steve Brandt admits that he's not involved as much as he could be but more than most in the neighborhood. He drives the strip three to four times a week and shops at some of the places and attends meetings at Sabathani.
- Sharon Parker, who recently bought a house on 42nd, feels it's important to be able to shop and obtain services in her neighborhood as much as possible. She also commented that she had a difficult time finding a home in the city with four bedrooms and a large lot.

Comments

McMartin thinks that help for low-income people to buy homes and businesses would help the area. He thinks that Bryant is waking up, that the people who live here are starting to meet and communicate more. This makes him think that this pluralistic society thing might actually work. Passow feels that Sabathani is a big asset. Korpi doesn't like businesses catering to drug dealers or giving pagers to 12-year-olds. Robinson has been a resident about 20 years and believes that the city shouldn't just write nodes off. Steve Brant wants to avoid the traditional streetscape and start with the health of commercial areas and then move toward beautification. In his article on 38th Street (*Star Tribune*, May 11, 1997) he commented that the MCDA study said there was too much space on 38th Street and the mayor concurred.

The questions I asked neighborhood staff:

1. What are the three best things about living in your neighborhood?
2. What are the three biggest concerns you have living in your neighborhood?
3. Do you shop along 38th Street and how do you travel along 38th Street?
4. What businesses do you think are lacking?
5. What would you like to see added to 38th Street?
6. What would you like to see subtracted from 38th Street?
7. Is there any business associations in this neighborhood?
8. Which businesses do you have problems with and why?
9. What do you think are the best businesses and why?
10. How do you find out about businesses on 38th Street?
11. Are you willing as a neighborhood to cooperate with other neighborhoods that also share 38th Street?
12. Do you know of any residents I should talk to in this neighborhood living along 38th Street?
13. What businesses should I contact?
14. Do you have any upcoming neighborhood, node or business association meetings?
15. What do you think the city of Minneapolis could do to help you better 38th Street?
16. Do you have any specific economic goals and plans?
17. What is your relationship with your State Representative and City Council Members?

The neighborhoods included were:

1. Kingfield, director: Sara Linnes Robinson (lives at 38th Street and Fifth Avenue in Bryant)
2. Longfellow, director: Kristy Rock (not a resident of the immediate area), business coordinator: Donna Sanders (resident of Powderhorn Park)
3. Bancroft, community organizer: Maggie McLetchie (not a resident of the immediate area)
4. Bryant, coordinator: Trudy Fuller (resident of Bryant)
5. Powderhorn Park, director: Scott Hawkins (Powderhorn Park resident. Hawkins has since left this position.)
6. Central, coordinator: David Chapman (not a resident of the immediate area), community organizer: Sally Stromquist (resident of Central)
7. SENA, coordinator: Craig Anderson (not a resident of the immediate area)

Positive things about the Neighborhoods

- Access to the rest of the city (6 neighborhoods)
- Affordability of housing (4 neighborhoods)
- Green space and parks (3 neighborhoods)
- Diversity of people(minorities and age) (2 neighborhoods)
- Well maintained housing stock (2 neighborhoods)
- Other benefits include low crime, schools, older homes with character, sense of community, safety and water quality.

Concerns about the area

- Encroaching crime and perception of crime. Staff also mention drugs, prostitution, and the fact that when crime is squashed in one area it springs up in a new area. (6 neighborhoods)
- Vacant buildings (2 neighborhoods)
- Housing (2 neighborhoods)
- Airplane noise (2 neighborhoods) and
- Noise pollution from boom boxes and cars (2 neighborhoods)
- Other concerns include the perception that Nicollet and 38th Street is not well maintained, business development caused by zoning allows for problem businesses, blighted commercial areas, low property values (beginning to increase but not as fast as rest of the Twin Cities), the environment, education, concentration of poverty (system perpetuates itself), and parks and water quality. The residents in Longfellow were concerned about Fairview Clinic, some felt it looked like a juvenile detention center,

Travel

The majority of the neighborhoods believe people travel by car and drive by as part of a route out of the area, not to shop there. Some believe that people take the bus (especially seniors) but the wait is too long to be an effective means of transportation. Some also walk and bike and the neighborhoods would like to encourage more of this.

Shopping

Most of the neighborhood leaders don't really shop along 38th Street. They do cite Nicollet Hardware, Everett's food, Dairy Queen, Peterson's Hardware, South Side Farm store, Clyde's Auto, convenience stores, flower shops and Casalenda's as places they've been to.

New businesses they would like to see

- Coffee shop (3 neighborhoods)
- Grocery store (co-op or full size) (4 neighborhoods)
- Drug store, (5 neighborhoods)
- Book store, (2 neighborhoods)
- Restaurants, (3 neighborhoods)
- Other ideas are a bank, bagel shop, Laundromat, gathering spots, and meat market.
- Overall, the neighborhood staff feels an atmosphere is missing, and that the area is ugly and not welcoming. The street doesn't say that this is a good space or is safe; it needs an identity, a focal point. Patrick from SENA says that the "Hard Rock Cafe" might be nice. Although he said this jokingly the underlying reason for the comment was to stress the importance that he feels for some sort of a large destination business along 38th Street.

Additions

All of the neighborhoods would like to see more beautification including general street work like trees, boulevards, planters, decorative lighting, less concrete and more greenery, more gardens, which would give some sense of continuity along 38th Street. They do admit that some nodes are developed but there's nothing all along the street. The 35W exit should be moved from 36th to 38th Street. Also needed is a place for children and elders to relax. Anything that is to be done should be done well and planned out. Other ideas include: stores with living quarters above, stores with doctor/dentist offices upstairs, something that brings people in and attracts people, and beat cops. Sara Linnes Robinson wants Sabathani opened up and to know all the agencies that it houses.

Subtractions

The things that neighborhoods would like to see subtracted from 38th Street mainly deal with structures. They believe corner stores lead to trash and over-priced goods, which take advantage of the neighborhoods for the residents who can't leave the area to shop. They'd like to see vacant commercial buildings and housing removed and the nonnode businesses changed to housing. Things also to be removed include crime, deteriorated buildings (some can be redone if the city wouldn't wait so long, usually it's too late and they must be torn down), and spot zoning commercial areas must go. Powderhorn wants churches to be moved from commercial intersections because it kills the intersection. The city should buy out spot zoning and make it more consistent. This should work both ways, turning a business into a house if it's in the middle of a residential area and making a house into a business in a commercial area.

Business associations

There is only one business association along 38th Street, at 38th and Cedar Avenue. Some of the businesses don't want to be in an association because of a 40-acre study done years ago where some businesses felt burned. There is a Longfellow Business association for the entire neighborhood and many businesses in this area are active but it's not specific to any node. Due to the numerous small businesses it's hard to get business associations going. There is a co-op grocery store meeting for Bryant for the work they're doing at 38th Street and Fourth Avenue. Also, the 38th and Chicago Task Force is active but doesn't solely focus on businesses, rather it deals with problems on the intersection.

Problem businesses

The major concerns with businesses surrounding the strange zoning on Nicollet, the body shops and car repairs need to stay up to standards, two neighborhoods mention Portland Foods and the 38th and Fourth corner store, convenience stores and Cup Foods.

Best businesses

The best businesses include Nicollet Hardware, the center for Performing Arts in Kingfield, Peterson's Hardware, Dairy Queen, Alias 8, South Side Farm Store, the Urban League, Tom's Construction (38th and Portland), Kevin's Amoco, Super America, and Sabathani.

Advertising

The neighborhood leaders believe that residents find out about businesses through word of mouth, neighborhood newsletters, building up reputations in the neighborhoods, SENA's business directory, commercial action groups, and in the *Southside Pride*.

Cooperation

All of the neighborhood leaders are willing to have their neighborhood cooperate with other neighborhoods that share 38th Street but it depends on what they're asked to do. Already some neighborhoods are working with others through the 38th and Chicago Task Force, the Bryant co-op, and Phelps Park. Most like the concept but are unsure about specifics and resource allocation. There seems to be a willingness to cooperate and a desire to improve 38th Street but volunteers and small business owners already feel overwhelmed with the amount of work that they must do and are fearful of taking on more commitments with unsure results. Unfortunately, neighborhoods are not currently focusing on 38th Street exclusively. Bancroft, Bryant, and Powderhorn Park did meet to initiate this study. Kingfield's major concern right now is their business project at 43rd and Nicollet, but 38th and Nicollet is also a concern. Longfellow is starting a new study on Minnehaha and shifting their focus there since most of 38th Street in their neighborhood is residential. The staff also feels that volunteers are often overwhelmed.

Suggestions for the City

The neighborhoods believe that the City could do many things to help them out.

- Sara Linnes Robinson from Kingfield wants money for the co-op on 38th and Fourth, and for the City to have a comprehensive plan for 38th Street. She said that 38th Street is an undesirable place to live for residents and in many places is on the edge of standards. The city needs to bite the bullet and decide if this really is a commercial strip. Right now she thinks the street is ugly and people think many intersections are scary places.
- Longfellow wants the city to pay attention to what the neighborhood wants.
- Bancroft wants the city to help facilitate and coordinate multiple-neighborhood planning, integrate neighborhoods into their planning and invest in the planning process.
- Bryant thinks the City should support neighborhood initiatives, and says that talk is cheap. The City studied areas along 38th Street and concluded they weren't economically viable, but people want revitalization.
- Powderhorn Park wants the city to move the 35W exit to 38th Street because it destroyed the Central and Lyndale neighborhoods, SENA concurred with this.
- Central thinks the city needs to do more by financing locations, sweeping the streets, increasing the involvement of public works and increase awareness at all levels for potential problems, and help neighborhoods get on the map.
- SENA thinks it was terrible that the MCDA study basically said to abandon nodes, which hasn't encouraged businesses to move in, on the flip-side it has worked to mobilize people at the grass-roots level and produce counter studies. SENA wants the LRT to be designed well with the bus system to take full advantage of it. The city needs to stop obstructing and start supporting the neighborhoods. Popular decorative street lighting for residences and businesses are a common cry but the city doesn't

encourage this, rather they discourage lighting. The city needs to get a workable drug policy and law enforcement so they are free to address livability issues. SENA has a high senior citizen population and needs a policy to allow seniors to stay in their homes and increase their transportation, and needs to learn how to encourage and maintain services. They believe they need zoning and other policies to allow for ways to increase density without compromising livability to support commercial areas. Lots of policies now decrease density. Ways to do this include: building smaller lots, having mixed-use buildings, mother-in-law apartments, town homes, duplexes, have zero lot lines but not single family homes with a big lot size. The city also needs to get a handle on law enforcement instead of misguided containment policies like periodic crackdowns, which only move the problem to somewhere else, according to Anderson.

Economic goals

The economic goals and plans these neighborhoods are working on include 38th Street and 42nd Avenue lighting project, landscaping, spending NRP money to invest in housing, and Bryant plans to build a co-op grocery store.

Relations with state representatives and council members

The neighborhoods don't tend to work with their state representatives but do tend to go back and forth with their city council, especially SENA, which has four council members. One neighborhood leader believes that the council members say that they support projects but don't follow through, and there is a feeling of having to twist arms to get actual results.

The questions I asked businesses were:

1. Why did you choose to locate your business on 38th Street?
2. What are the three largest benefits of having your business on 38th Street?
3. What are the three largest concerns of having your business on 38th Street?
4. How do people travel to your business?
5. Are your customers people from the immediate area or do you draw people from farther away?
6. What are your business projections for the next five years? (increasing, decreasing, or remaining the same)
7. What businesses do you think are lacking in your immediate area?
8. How invested are you in 38th Street and do you plan to be invested in the future? Why/Why not?
9. Would your business be willing to cooperate to bettering 38th Street?
10. What would you like to see added to 38th Street?
11. What would you like to see subtracted from 38th Street?
12. Are there any business associations in this neighborhood and do you belong to one? Why/why not? If one isn't offered do you think a business association in your area would be beneficial?
13. What are you doing now to advertise?
14. Do you think there is a kinship and cooperation among businesses along 38th Street?
15. Do you see 38th Street as a commercial corridor running east and west, rather than north and south such as along Chicago or Bloomington?
16. What do you think neighborhoods and the City of Minneapolis could do to help 38th Street?
17. What is the square footage of your business?

The businesses I spoke to were:

1. Center for Natural Healing Holistic Health, owner: Bruce Boraas, from the Kingfield Neighborhood, duplex turned into business at 3728 Nicollet Avenue.
2. Zuehlke Advertising, owner: Bill Zuehlke, at 1832 E. 38th Street, SENA marketing co-chair, 38th and Cedar Business Association president, member of Powderhorn Park Community Council.
3. Peterson's Hardware, owner: Brian Peterson from the Powderhorn Park Neighborhood, at 3746 Bloomington Avenue.
4. Nicollet Ace Hardware, Owner: Juleen Lynd from the Kingfield Neighborhood, at 3805 Nicollet Avenue. She has expanded by buying the adjacent bar and bowling alley, including the four apartments on top and has refinished them and added a new larger apartment above the newer part of the hardware store.
5. Tom's Furniture, owner: Tom Perez from the Bancroft Neighborhood at 3801 Chicago Avenue. (Tom's Furniture has since closed.)
6. Oak Tree Furniture, owner: Dave Odogard from the Standish Neighborhood.
7. Vintage Music, owner: Scott Holthus from the Powderhorn Park Neighborhood.
8. Cup Foods, Owner: Samir Abumayyaleh from the Powderhorn Park Neighborhood, at 3759 Chicago Avenue.

9. French Quarter Delicacies, previous owner: Alfreda Leonetta, formerly of the Bryant Neighborhood, at 38th Street and Third Avenue.
10. Kevin's Amoco, owner: Kevin from the Bancroft Neighborhood, at 38th Street and Bloomington Avenue.
11. Cedar Small Engine, owner: Jim Carlson from the Bancroft Neighborhood, at 38th Street and Cedar Avenue.
12. CLG Enterprises, owner: Jim Nichols from the Longfellow Neighborhood, at 38th Street and Minnehaha Avenue.

Reasons for Locating on 38th Street

There were a variety of reasons businesses chose to locate on 38th Street. These included proximity to home, the freeway, and the bus line, appropriate zoning, owning the building, better than downtown (cheaper rent and convenient parking), and large enough space.

- Brian Peterson inherited the business from his father and uncle and has owned the business for 12 years, but the building has been here for 50 years.
- Scott Holthus from Vintage Music moved because he'd outgrown the space on Lake Street, had the opportunity to own instead of rent, and had landlord problems in the past.
- Tom Perez is on both sides. He wants to stay and leave after being on 38th Street for 10 years.
- Alfreda Leonetta and her sister bought The French Quarter together in 1976 because they wanted to have a State Fair Booth in 1977, and in order to have a booth they needed a manufacturing place. They were from New Orleans and made their special New Orleans Snowballs. They chose this place because it was available, close to home and they were both teachers and wanted to do this as a hobby from June through August. Alfreda closed the business after her sister passed away.
- Kevin (of Kevin's Amoco) has owned his businesses since January of 1997 and has worked there since 1973. He chose the spot because of the people and the fact he'd worked there for so long.
- Jim Carlson (Cedar Small Engine) lives about 12 minutes away and has had the business since 1982. He started from scratch about 1977 out of his parents house in St. Paul, but then inspections came and told him he couldn't run a commercial business out of a residential place so he began looking at maps to relocate. There was a gas station at the corner of 38th and Cedar so in 1982 he bought the place. By 1986 he was running out of room so in 1988 he purchased the dance studio next door and expanded.
- Jim Nichols (CLG Enterprises) chose his spot for its central location, affordability, clean space and a good landlord.

Benefits

- Central location in the Twin Cities and closeness to the mega mall and all freeways (3 businesses)
- High level of traffic (3 businesses)
- The large amount of space (3 businesses)
- The neighborhood and sense of community (2 businesses)
- The parking is better on 38th Street than downtown (2 businesses)
- Other benefits include closeness to the bus line, improvements on Nicollet, cheaper rent, housing stock, economic variance -- high to low, diverse area, population density, good regulation of traffic with lights that allow for people to turn around, and the clean-ups on Saturdays have improved the business area on 38th Street and Chicago Avenue. These businesses go on to list children, older people and young families, high traffic on both 38th Street and Cedar, and a heavily populated area, easy access by bus and car, workforce in the Twin Cities, and good landlords.

Concerns

- Zeuhlke's Advertising was stripped of two parking spaces by MetroTransit bus zone.
- Center for Natural Healing's owner cites the presence of low income and people of color as a deterrent to suburbanites who aren't used to it; three businesses cite crime and a bad reputation as concerns.
- Lack of people who take care of their homes and the surrounding area (3 businesses)
- Other complaints include too much traffic and accidents occurring near businesses; need for more lights and increased police presence; graffiti, drugs, prostitution, concerns over the future of the area, crime and the lack of parking, especially for Nicollet Hardware. Tom's Furniture was thinking of closing because his life has been threatened and has since closed. He believes that the increase in crime leads to a decrease in business.

Transportation

The majority of businesses believe people drive to them. Some say it varies with those who walk or take the bus. Alfreda Leonetta said almost all her business was people who walked.

Customer Base

Most of the businesses draw customers from all over the Twin Cities area. Zuehlke's Advertising is a destination business, while Peterson's Hardware and the former French Quarter Delicacies, draw people from the immediate area (3-5 miles). Vintage Music has an international business and customers from the Twin Cities and greater Minnesota. Scott Holthus sells only 78 rpm records and the machines to play them on. Most of the records are from the 20s, 30s and 40s. He's fashioning the building on the inside to be of the same years, 1890s-1959. Even Matt Dillon stopped in when he was filming the movie "Beautiful Girls." Carlson mentions he gets about 75 percent of his business from the area and the rest from the greater Twin Cities, mostly in the southern suburbs like Bloomington, Apple Valley, Burnsville and Richfield. CLG Enterprises market at national shows and have customers from Georgia and Colorado.

Projections

All of the businesses say that their businesses is increasing except for Tom's Furniture, which he thinks is due to the location and the negative things occurring at the corner (38th Street and Chicago) deterring customers. The holistic health clinic cites institutional prohibitions like insurance not covering alternative medicine as a reason why his business is not doing as well as it could. CLG enterprises have been seeing a decrease because they're so dependent on rodeo trends and country music trends; they rarely match the general economy.

New businesses the would like to see

- Upscale restaurant (5 businesses)
- Anything that brings in people and is stable (2 businesses)
- Other ideas were a vegetarian restaurant, coffee house, drug store, bakery, grocery, more things for young people, banks, bookstore, Hallmark, lumber and lighting store, a comfortable place for the elderly, video store, Kinko's copies, liquor store, and a strip area with businesses like an insurance office or others that wouldn't increase loitering activity. At the corner of Chicago and 38th Street there once used to be a supermarket (where the church is now), Amoco and mechanics (where the SA is now), a sewing shop, a drug store, theater, hardware and laundromat some of these would be nice to have again, according to Sam at Cup Foods.

Investment?

- All businesses except for Tom Perez with Tom's Furniture are invested in the area and have no plans to move.
- Bruce Boras will stay as long as the facilities meet his needs and he can make a living and has enough space available.
- Bill Zuehlke is heavily committed and owns his corner and an apartment building across the street, which gives him more control. He's active in the community and his retirement is here so he can't afford to let the neighborhood go down.
- Brian Peterson wants to stay around another 50 years.
- Juleen Lynd from Nicollet Hardware is invested and can't just sell. She commented that businesses have to weather out bad times as opposed to homeowners who can pick up and move.
- Scott Holthus from Vintage Music has a 15-year mortgage so he's stuck for awhile. He's put in a lot of labor and has worked on the outside appearance as well as the inside.

Cooperation?

The majority of the owners are willing to cooperate but I believe they are unaware of the many ways in which they could already help. Peterson believes that just by being on his corner helps out the area. Nicollet Hardware has made major improvements and feels they are the major contributors in the area. Nicollet Hardware spent one-third of their total improvement costs on the exterior. Tom Perez believes the neighborhood is doing a lot, but he sees cops who drive by and then leave and they don't come back, so he thinks the police are not doing enough. He's been trying to get involved though.

Most of the businesses believe that businesses remain independent (don't collaborate with other businesses) and that it's too time consuming for small business owners to commit to more meetings. Sam from Cup Foods says there is cooperation on his corner between him and Tom from Tom's Furniture as well as with his tenants. He says they all know each other at the corner and help out with change or swap cigarettes (with SA) if one store is low. Jim Carlson believes the business association at 38th Street and Cedar has helped and the SENA commercial action committee. Jim Nichols believes that there is definitely cooperation between businesses in his area. People must share the same parking lot. He finds that it's hard for people to come together unless there's a really bad issue and then people tend to rally. He's hoping that people will come together about the proposed LRT at 38th Street and Minnehaha.

Additions

Aside from new businesses, other things businesses would like to see added include: the business corridor being put before other projects like the greenway in Kingfield; more clean-up and lighting, make zoning more lax, city leadership regarding inspections to keep up housing and businesses, keep up store fronts, work on the road, keep up the nature of businesses as bouncy and diverse, beautification, lighting, trees, parking, general fix-up and more painted garbage cans. They want 38th Street to have an identity.

Subtractions

The things that should be subtracted from 38th Street according to businesses include auto repair shops, vacant structures, crime, restructure freeway, weed out less successful businesses but don't tear down buildings unless they can be replaced.

Business Associations

- There is only one real business association in the area and that is the one at 38th Street and Cedar Avenue. Businesses that aren't on this corner believe that a business association might help.
- Brian Peterson thinks businesses are covered by the neighborhood associations that have a slight business aspect. He said they tried a 38th Street and Bloomington Avenue association but only two people showed up. He thinks it'd be helpful but it would need to be active.
- Lynd from Nicollet Hardware has seen many boards come and go and says that the businesses themselves have addressed issues together and she feels that the neighborhoods underestimate how much businesses already communicate and support each other and use each other's businesses. They are all really busy small-business owners.
- Cup Foods belongs to the grocery store association, with all other grocery stores, where they meet to discuss updates on laws, products and suppliers.
- Kevin (Amoco) believes that everyone's independent and not many businesses are around long enough to build an association.
- Jim Nichols is on the board of directors of the Longfellow business association and is trying to get more people involved.

Advertising

When asked where or if they advertise, businesses said that mostly they advertised in the *Yellow Pages*, two relied mostly on word of mouth, two in the *Southside Pride*, two by door-to-door flyers and also by direct mail, corporate coupons by Hardware Hank and Ace Hardware, the *Southwest Journal*, Public Radio, flyers, state fair exposure, and cooperative efforts with Sabathani. Some believe the *Southside Pride* is now too expensive. CLG Enterprises works with networking and trade shows to get their name out. Businesses are thinking about expanding to the Internet to gain exposure.

Commercial or Residential?

The majority of businesses see 38th Street as a commercial corridor but two believe that the street is just random businesses in commercial pockets and this may be a nice mix. Jim Nichols of Longfellow sees 38th Street as residential from Hiawatha to the Mississippi.

Suggestions for the neighborhoods and the City

The suggestions that businesses gave for neighborhoods and the City are many.

- Bruce Boraas wants to remove K-Mart, and have Kingfield recognize 38th/46th/Nicollet, as commercial corridors and clean the area up. He thinks car alarm stores should be torn down. Overall he thinks that neighborhoods talk a lot and are full of energy but get little results. He is fearful of getting involved because of the time commitment, which may not lead to results.
- Bill Zuehlke knows that change requires money and it boils down to NRP grants and other sources. SENA now requires business associations at corners to access more money. Small businesses need to look for money, so they can improve building appearance with paint, clean-ups, new lighting and awnings.
- Brian Peterson knows that Powderhorn Park funds are available to get established and fix up, and feels this should continue. The city should keep funds available. Brand new businesses aren't coming in and so the City should focus on existing businesses.
- Juleen Lynd from Ace Hardware wants a program to help deal with parking; they need parking to grow, and zoning requirements should change to allow for parking. She doesn't want traffic diversion devices because she needs the intersection viable, for easy access and visibility.
- Tom Perez wants support from the police.
- Dave Odogard from the Oak Tree believes the city should initiate a program partially funded by the city and part by businesses, to improve the appearance of the area.
- Scott from Vintage Music believes the neighborhoods are doing well in this sector. He thinks inspections and licensing need complete revamping. He believes they are making it impossible for businesses to move. He had to jump over many hurdles and had many fees to pay. The regulations are on a corporate level not at the small-business scale. The city needs to work with neighborhoods, not against them.
- Sam from Cup foods wants more lighting, which will lead to more safety.
- Leonetta believes the snow removal is bad and once she got ticketed because the snowdrifts were so high, but she believes this was due to plowing problems.

- Kevin (Amoco) wants more clean-ups like at Chicago Avenue and 38th Street. He is pleased that Powderhorn Park and Bancroft have been able to help him with matching grants for outside remodeling.
- Jim Carlson would like to see more matching grants.
- Jim Nichols would like to see more transportation and bike patrols. He said that this has helped Longfellow who purchased some bike patrol time with their NRP dollars to increase police visibility and open the lines of communication.

Square Footage

The square feet range from 1,800 at Holistic Healing to 12,000 for CLG Enterprises.

Comments

- Bill Zuehlke says the sidewalk liability policies should be changed; relax laws on signs, which hang out away from the building. The 38th and Cedar business association has more political clout, and an easier time applying for money since they are organized as a business association.
- Brian Peterson says that 38th is a good street and he'd hate to see things close. He thinks that police patrols could increase.
- Tom Perez believes that a combination of people working together could help things out a great deal.
- Scott Holthus from Vintage Music is a preservationist and doesn't want older buildings torn down or new houses put up so fast. He sees neighborhoods along 38th Street doing a great job.
- Alfreda Leonetta says that there are always good people trying to be established and they should get money to improve the roof, etc.
- Kevin believes more police patrolling in the area and cracking down on suspicious behavior would help. He admits that after 7 p.m. it gets scary because things get dark. Decorative lighting would help, he believes. He commented that Cedar helps that area feel more like a community.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

A. GENERAL IDEAS

1. Crime prevention

- Auto theft prevention grants
- Matching grant program for exterior and interior improvements of businesses
- Require a commitment to neighborhood community service for grant recipients
- First-time home buyer down payment grant program, matching deferred loan
- Program for housing or principal reduction grants
- Home/garage safety grants
- More police attention
- By helping out with grant money and matching funds, neighborhoods and the city can only benefit 38th Street. The only negative is prioritizing which nodes are to be saved and which are to fold.

2. Aesthetics

- Pedestrian lighting -- currently lighting is only done by overhanging lights on telephone poles. Streetlights, lantern-type fixtures, especially with hanging flower baskets, would increase beauty. Lights should be on the alleys to reduce criminals congregating. One man from the Kingfield business meeting said, pounding his fists on the table, "You can never have enough lighting".
- Make businesses more inviting to consumers by having big, open windows, nothing boarded up or with bars.
- Facade improvements -- general exterior face lifts with paint and creative additions like awnings. Most of the properties need limited improvements in order to upgrade their future usability. The storefronts and facades of many properties have been neglected and need minor facelifts. The general condition, maintenance and appearance of the commercial area public spaces give a negative perception to prospective customers.
- Sponsor semi-annual clean-up day.
- Increase greenery -- trees, sidewalk planters, more residential gardens like 38th Street and 12th Avenue, reintroduce native plants, neighborhood yard competitions
- Public art
- Murals -- these add color and increase participation from the community and youth.
- Install more trashcans like what's being done at 38th Street and Chicago and improve sidewalk upkeep. Programs that instituted clean-ups like the 38th Street and Chicago Task force would also be helpful.
- Promote neighborhoods -- little signifies different neighborhoods except for small signs. Neighborhoods should be proud and creative, ie. like the banners on Lake Street and Cedar Avenue.
- Nice sign, like at 38th and Cedar Avenue, should be at other major nodes.

- Improving the aesthetics does many things to help the area. It fosters pride, takes care of problem spots, gives people a focus and adds to an overall positive feeling. On the other hand, some believe that the focus should be on fixing the businesses first then worrying about all the extras. Yet, to draw new businesses in, the area needs to be appealing.

3. Structural Improvements to bettering 38th Street

- Reduce impact of aircraft noise by diverting planes over less populated areas.
- Helping to relocate businesses from residential areas to business nodes through the use of incentives (subsidies).
- Increase concentration of businesses at nodes. Bancroft helped to buy an abandoned gas station, which was located between nodes, and rebuilt a house to foster the growth of business nodes. Currently, businesses appear disjointed, so new growth should target placing complimentary businesses next to each other, unlike the solitary Naaman's barbershop at 38th Street and 11th Avenue.
- Remodel old buildings for new uses, i.e. gas station into coffee shop called "Brewberry's" at Fairview and Randolph in St. Paul.
- Shared space for one-person owners and mixed use with apartments above stores like Ace Hardware on 38th Street and Nicollet.
- Change storage space to commercial space.
- Demark crosswalks -- this would help pedestrians when crossing the road by alerting cars of busy intersections, hopefully slowing down the traffic. Cars drive by too fast and crosswalks should be marked and stop signs should be added.
- Attract nearby businesses to relocate to nodes.
- Improve snow removal so that sidewalks, entrances, and street parking remain clear.
- Bike exchange -- pick up and drop off -- expand and create commuter bike routes, like on Minnehaha which has designated bike and parking lanes.
- Increase signage -- Phelps Park and Community Center are nearby on 39th Street but you wouldn't know this from 38th Street. A sign signifying Phelps Park one block south would be nice for those who don't travel the route frequently. Something like the Matthews Park sign would be nice. This would provide an opportunity for something artistic. There should also be a sign to the Mississippi River and Highway 35 W.
- Reduce the number of vacant houses
- Relocate Bus Stops to be closer to lighted areas. Redesign to make them more attractive.
- Maintain and/or improve the structural integrity, physical systems, physical design, and usability of commercial properties as evidenced by greater overall accessibility.
- Increase shelters, perhaps a gazebo or community shelter currently there are no shelters to provide cover from the rain (except a few bus shelters), or places to sit down like benches or parks.
- Coordinate the timing of lights -- this would streamline traffic and increase 38th Street as a major thoroughfare through south Minneapolis
- Enforce laws -- regarding loitering and proper upkeep of buildings

- Increase parking, also, provide for only short-term parking on the streets to disallow people to park and take the bus downtown
- Create more business associations at nodes, which will enable them to lead to qualified money and other programs.
- Work with the new proposed LRT stop at Hiawatha and 38th Street.
- Increase the bus frequency along 38th Street. Currently busses come every half-hour. It would be more convenient for shoppers to be able to visit more than one node while they're out. Busses that come every 10 to 15 minutes might help. Riley Owens from MTCO took an average of June weekday ridership of bus 23 running across 38th Street and the average rider per day was 1,223. One of the benefits of 38th Street is that it is accessible by bus from multiple directions. Along 38th Street runs bus 23 and many busses cross the street running north and south. Along Nicollet is Bus 18, Fourth Avenue runs Bus 9, Chicago Avenue runs Bus 5, Bloomington Avenue runs Bus 14, Cedar Avenue runs Bus 22, from 23rd Avenue to 38th Avenue, along 38th Street runs bus 19, along Minnehaha Avenue runs bus 7, and along 42nd Avenue runs bus 20.
- It is evident that there are numerous ways to improve the structure of the area. Whenever possible, existing space and any new construction should be filled with businesses that supplement the existing tenant mix of the neighborhood and destination-type businesses.

4. Other

- Encourage use of the *Southside Directory* (published by *Southside Pride*). Make advertising more available to businesses, and encourage neighborhood associations to distribute their own business directory, like SENA does now. Currently the *Southside Directory* passes out a business directory to the areas where they deliver. All the businesses fall within this area, from Lake Street to Richfield and 35W to the Mississippi. According to Southside publisher Edwin Felien, this is the most complete list of businesses that they are capable of doing. They use other directories and over the years they've talked to almost all the businesses. This database is not assessable via computer. Making the directory accessible online and by disk would be a helpful addition to neighborhoods. Business directories should be self-funding with ads from businesses.
- Right in the neighborhoods surrounding 38th Street are some buildings that are already categorized as historically significant and many are on the waiting list of historically significant buildings. It would be in the best interest of all of the neighborhoods to familiarize themselves with the structures already classified and lobby for the buildings on the waiting list to be put on the historically significant list. This will help the neighborhoods and 38th Street in a couple of ways. Historic buildings have separate funding that will help with the upkeep. Walking tours are given of these historic places and this would increase exposure to the area and, perhaps most importantly, it would be keeping a part of history alive in this area for generations to come. The Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) provides technical assistance on sensitive rehabilitation of historic properties, and sponsors lectures and panel discussions. They also evaluate the architectural and historical significance of buildings, districts and sites.

- Go to upcoming Minneapolis sector workshops and public hearings on the city's proposed new zoning codes. The new zoning codes will change the classification of all properties currently having a business or manufacturing code. Work in coordinating projects with changing zoning restrictions.
- Promote Sabathani because there is a high number of senior citizens in the area. Perhaps a large sign with all the organizations in Sabathani listed would be a way to present this information. Sabathani allows people to rent/lease conference rooms, and use their auditorium and gymnasium/studio. Nonprofit groups are there and a wide variety of services including: childcare, senior center, counseling, church organizations, drug rehabilitation and many more. Sabathani Senior Center has grocery shopping every Monday, a nurse that comes and checks blood pressure, weight etc., movies; every six weeks they have a food doctor, on Wednesdays they exercise, they offer ceramic classes, go on field trips, play cards like Bridge, have a club called "You Meet Us" on the first Monday of the month, hold chapel, offer seasonal flu shots and seasonal tax assistance, provide health screening, have educational classes on different topics, and they offer quilting and art appreciation. Every Monday through Friday they have noon lunches and have 20-40 people. They offer a van, which picks up and takes home people, but the boundary of the bus is 62 to Franklin, and Lyndale to Minnehaha. People can come from all over but the van caters to mostly disabled people. It would be a great service to the area if this bus or additional buses were to run often and extend throughout all of East 38th Street.
- Have transportation assistance for seniors.
- Have the city and neighborhoods communicate more often and more effectively.
- Have planning meetings and invite NRP and the planning department's representatives to planning meetings.
- Strengthen relationships among business people and residents so that all will be better informed and will be better able to collaborate on initiatives by having block meetings and outreach events.
- Powderhorn Park already has a home-based business network and this should be expanded throughout 38th Street in order to help residents who want to be entrepreneurs to have the resources and confidence to do so.
- Assess what business and services are already on 38th Street and what additional ones are desired through questionnaires and expanded research teams.
- Market 38th Street as a commercial area to businesses.
- Provide technical assistance to business people.
- Report available properties to the MCDA and local neighborhood business committees
- Improve the safety and sense of ownership of public spaces.
- Encourage businesses to participate in Metro Transits Adopt-A-Shelter program and the Crime Net (fax alerts).

B. FULL PLAN

- Develop attainable vision. There are many ways in which one could view 38th Street. These options would be to look at it as a grab bag without any real plan or method to the street, or look at it as a series of nodes with random businesses interspersed, or look at it as a service district/trade area, or finally to view it as a series of segments.

It is this last suggestion, viewing the street as a series of segments, that I would like to advocate. Anyone who's ever walked down 38th Street or driven on it could tell you that there are different feelings throughout the street. These current differentiations, rather than being a distraction, could be an asset. Overall, I see 38th Street being remarkably improved by fixing the street itself and the sidewalks. To increase pride and beauty in the street I see small steps taken to add beauty to it through the use of planters, trees and decorative lighting.

I envision 38th Street starting at Nicollet as a bustling area with a real lively intersection. Then I see a well-kept-up neighborhood area with Sabathani and the Urban League. Then I see 38th Street and Fourth Avenue as another vibrant area with a new food co-op, which will bring new life to that corner. Then I see the street progressing in that fashion with high priority placed on homes and selective improvements of vibrant business nodes. After the developed intersection at 38th Street and 42nd Avenue I see 38th Street as turning residential and staying that way.

By incorporating both street-long plans, like beautification, and segment-specific policies, an overall organization should gradually blend the two steps together, making 38th Street the bustling community corridor that it once was.

- Administrative resources. An independent group will be vital in coordinating 38th Street planning and implementing changes. They must then seek to form a collaboration between all neighborhoods to develop a comprehensive policy for 38th Street. This group would make it easier for businesses to approach a single joint body, rather than have to convince as many as four neighborhood organizations separately to make policy changes.
- Building on existing strong points. Improvements should be made by building on what's already on 38th Street. For example, do more positive things at intersections like what was done at 38th Street and Cedar, where businesses put up a sign and improved lighting. This could be done at other nodes. Bryant Neighborhood has initiated the grocery store co-op on the corner of Fourth Avenue and 38th Street. This will be a key thing for all of 38th Street neighborhoods to support. Also 38th Street and Fourth Avenue and 38th Street and Chicago Avenue have improved the area with painted trashcans and potted flowers. Bancroft neighborhood also worked to improve commercial concentrations at nodes by purchasing a gas station and tearing it down and rebuilding a house. Another example is the Kingfield Neighborhood, who would like to redo lighting, but since they know that in the year 2000 the city plans to redo Nicollet, Kingfield plans to wait so both projects can be done together. This selective blending of residential and commercial should continue but without 38th Street seeming to have a split personality. The energy is out there, it just needs to be focused and built upon.
- Designate 38th Street as a commercial corridor. This would enable the efforts along 38th Street to be eligible for funding, help the city to deal with 38th Street more

effectively, give it an identity and a focus and put it on a higher level of priority and equate it with similar streets.

- Deciding on intersections. The policy makers for 38th Street should make hard decisions and decide which intersections to identify as nodes that will survive, and which should fade away. With limited resources dedicated to neighborhood revitalization, prioritizing nodes for support is critical. By applying appropriate criteria, agencies can target funds to support viable nodes, while converting others to alternative sustainable uses such as housing. If changes are not made, vacant buildings where stores once were will become breeding grounds for crime, and further decrease the value of the neighborhood.
- Deciding on Nodes. Some nodes must be strengthened and some should be converted to residential. Nodes like 38th and Cedar and 38th and Chicago, which already have node meetings, should be strengthened, while nodes where there is little communication and dwindling businesses should be incorporated into other nodes and turned back into housing, such as 38th Street and Bloomington and partial developments of one or two businesses together that form sort of "half nodes".
- Subsidies. Subsidize expenses of businesses moving from unsustainable nodes or nonnode commercial space to more viable locations. Subsidies are critical because many businesses own their buildings and are debt free. Incurring debt reduces the sale value of the business, which is for many owners their primary source of funds for retirement.
- Regulations and Zoning. Enforce or update zoning regulations to prevent continued nonnode commercial activities. Failure to do so pulls valuable market activity, that could instead reinforce node activities. Some nodes fall into special areas (i.e. enterprise zones) where the processes are simplified or less burdensome. Certain neighborhood areas may deserve special consideration for regulation reform in order to stimulate development of vacant space. Many entrepreneurs stated that many city ordinances are often unnecessarily challenging for new businesses. In order to make it easier for businesses to move into the area neighborhoods, policy makers for 38th Street should advocate special consideration for regulation reform in order to stimulate development of vacant space.
- Streetscape. A streetscape plan should be developed to indicate the relationship of the public right-of-way areas and private spaces. This streetscape plan will help to establish the image for the area. Plan for improved lighting of the public spaces, including the parking areas.
- Facades. The renovation or replacement of building facades to provide a more customer-oriented, friendly appearance in place of the present fortress-like storefronts that intimidate the customer.
- Business Recruitment. Have a proactive business recruitment program aimed at maintaining a balance between the convenience-type goods and services that serve the nearby neighborhoods and additional destination-type businesses that will expand the customer attraction from beyond the neighborhood. Each business recruited should be well conceived and must serve as an additional catalyst to encourage broader customer use. Several buildings are occupied by uses that do not serve the neighborhood, or the retail customers visiting the corner. To the extent, over time, some of these noncomplimentary uses can be phased out and replaced, the entire

revitalization program will be better served. Once the Development team has formulated its business mix strategy, these uses that are not complimentary will become obvious.

- Parking. Develop a parking management plan for more efficient use of off-street and on-street public parking.
- Marketing. Develop a marketing and promotion plan that can provide the most cost-effective programs for the benefit of all the businesses at the center: special events, cooperative advertising, better public signage, more attractive and more effective store windows
- Clean Up. A more effective area-wide clean-up and snow removal program that will insure that the area will be more pedestrian friendly at all times of the year, during the day and in the evenings.
- The City. The City Planning Commission must take a stronger role in consolidating commercial activity toward existing nodes. MCDA, along with the planning commission, should create incentives for businesses to relocate to nodes as well as have a plan for converting excess commercial space into an alternative use, predictably residential, and compensating landowners that lose the existing use of their building. Healthy Minneapolis neighborhoods will depend on a combination of incentives to draw businesses to nodes, zoning enforcement to prevent continued scatter-site developments, and funding to transform nonviable commercial space.

THE MAIN STREET APPROACH.

One model that could be followed is The Main Street approach. This group has re-invented and improved many deteriorated city streets. They provide great resources and have a well-thought-out plan. Since 1980, the National Main Street Center has been working with communities across the nation to revitalize their historic or traditional commercial areas. The Main Street program is designed to improve all aspects of the downtown or central business district, producing both tangible and intangible benefits. Improving economic management, strengthening public participation, and making downtown a fun place to visit. Their approach is to work on the design, organization, promotion and economic restructuring of a street. The Main Street program could be a great resource to look at as far as planning and discover what has worked in similar areas.

- Design. The design should be improved by: rehabilitating historic buildings, encouraging supportive new construction, developing sensitive design management systems, and long-term planning.
- Organization. Organization needs to be such that there is consensus and cooperation among the entire strip of neighborhoods, businesses and residents.
- Promotion. Marketing the traditional commercial district's assets to customers, potential investors, new businesses, local citizens and visitors.
- Economic restructuring. Strengthen the district's existing economic base while finding ways to expand it to meet new opportunities and challenges from outlying development.

- Comprehensive. A single project cannot revitalize a downtown or commercial neighborhood. An ongoing series of initiatives is vital to build community support and create lasting progress.
- Incremental. Small projects make a big difference. They demonstrate that "things are happening" and hone the skills and confidence the program will need to tackle more complex problems.
- Self-Help. Although the National Main Street Center can provide valuable direction and hands-on technical assistance, only local leadership can initiate long-term success by fostering and demonstrating community involvement and commitment to the revitalization effort.
- Public/private partnership. Revitalization needs the support and expertise of both the public and private sectors. For an effective partnership, each must recognize the strengths and weaknesses of the other.
- Quality. From storefront design to promotional campaigns to special events, quality must be the main goal.
- Change. Changing community attitudes and habits is essential to bring about a commercial district renaissance. The public's perceptions must shift so that practices to support and sustain the revitalization process will occur. The creation of a more positive image is probably the most important single action that is needed to turn around the neighborhood center. All aspects of management -- leasing, marketing, security, parking, etc. -- will have direct impact on the area's image.
- Action-oriented. Frequent visible changes in the look and activities of the commercial District will reinforce the perception of positive change. Small but dramatic improvements early in the process will remind the community that the revitalization effort is underway.

C. RESOURCES

- MCDA -- Iric Nathanson (MCDA finance coordinator with small businesses)
The MCDA has put together its criteria to gauge whether the business has potential to succeed and will have a positive impact in the community in order to qualify for MCDA grants. He has worked with over 300 businesses and believes he has worked with one at the intersection of 38th and Nicollet. The process is done on a case-by-case basis and bankers and businesses both can approach the MCDA. They have a variety of programs and ways of determining the loans. Sometimes it's done by committee which may review the plan from the outside, but other times internal decisions are made and often the process involves the bank. The MCDA may chose to fill in the gap between the bank and the business or guarantee the loan to the bank.
- BUSINESS LINK -- Barbara Elavadro from Business Link is part of the MCDA. This organization provides information and services to businesses. This department gets requests from businesses to obtain many things from the city, ie. permits, employees, space, loans and they keep track of what space is available. This space information they receive is from realtors, and people who call her about space that is available. Neighborhoods should take advantage of this and always call in with dimensions and selling points when property becomes vacant on 38th Street. Some businesses come in with specific requests and locations.
- MAIN STREET PROGRAM -- This detailed program has resources and information about how other commercial corridors have gone through dramatic positive changes.

D. CITY PLANS

- **Planning Department** -- According to Monique Mackenzie with the Minneapolis Planning Department, currently there are no specific plans or policies for 38th Street. McKenzie said that the city is trying to put attention on commercial areas and community corridors but unfortunately the city budget for community areas has been cut in half so the study has been scaled back. In the Minneapolis Plan there are some guidelines in general but nothing has been developed to address 38th Street specifically. In the Comprehensive Minneapolis plan, there was a goal to recognize and designate "key" streets where the city needs to invest. These special community corridors would include 38th Street. The criteria for investment vary. Conditions are outlined but there are no threshold limits specified. Some of these conditions include traffic counts (both relative and actual), high residential area to commercial, the dimension of the street, streets that connect multiple neighborhoods, and if the street is an identifier in the neighborhood. Thirty-eighth Street easily fits into these categories. The programs and policies through the MCDA, which has both a focus document and an annual document with goals, has a goal of focusing on commercial corridors and hybrids like 38th Street. She says in relation to zoning that the new changes are merely to convert property rights to match the equivalent of what businesses or homes are now. Concerned residents and neighborhood activists should go to meetings to discuss converting some commercial areas to residential or vice versa. In the next six to eight months there are no planning issues or policies, that will alter 38th Street. So far, the city has not categorized 38th Street in any helpful manner for receiving assistance.
- **MCDA** -- Bob Chong from the MCDA says currently they have no plans for the development of 38th Street but did know of a study done once back in the 1970's or 1980s.
- **MNDOT** -- The Department of Transportation (DOT) has no future plans to improve the area around 38th Street and Hiawatha. Mike Spilman, the project coordinator for roadway projects along Hiawatha from Lake Street to E. 46th Street, says that Hiawatha is complete but changes may happen later when the LRT stop is decided upon. It is now in the pre-design stage.
- **State Representative** -- Representative Linda Wejcman of 61B She is supportive of a grocery store at 38th Street and Fourth Avenue. She believes that zoning is a big issue but that it's a city issue. In Milwaukee and in St. Paul there are many streets with mixed residential and commercial uses and she likes this mix. Wejcman believes the area is lacking community services like a drug store and a restaurant. She also believes the area needs more commercial development and will need subsidies. She will support what neighborhoods and citizens want. A plan is necessary and she knows there is work to be done. The boarded-up buildings detract from the street and she thinks that funds may be available to help.

- **Mayor's view** – (from an article by Steve Brandt where he interviewed the mayor)
The mayor has said that she sees 38th as a Minneapolis thoroughfare with more business square footage than neighbors can support. Some intersections are worth preserving. Ridership on the 38th St. line now is about 325,000 people per year. Some wonder where the money to acquire and tear down vacant commercial space -- much less erect new housing -- will come from. When the Powderhorn Park neighborhood last year asked Sayles- Belton to designate a pool of money, she said the city had no additional money and urged that neighborhoods use their revitalization funds. (A recent article in the *Star Tribune* indicates that these funds, too, may be running out.)⁸

⁸ Brandt, Steve. "Reinforcing or Reinventing Intersections along 38th." *Star Tribune* 11 May 1997.

VIII. EXAMPLES OF SUCCESSFUL DEVELOPMENT

- **38th & Chicago Task Force:** The 38th Street and Chicago Avenue Task Force meets monthly to bring the four neighborhoods that share this corner together to plan on how to better this intersection. They participate in Adopt-A-Block programs and clean sweep, which helps to pick up trash along the street and sidewalks. They were instrumental in the beautification of the bus turn-around. They plan to have a youth mural competition in the future. One of the issues they are concerned with is the constant loitering. In order to combat this they urge businesses to put up "No Loitering" signs so police can be called. They petitioned the city for new garbage cans and got three so one can go by each bus stop; these cans were painted. They need a prevalent beat police officer. They try to encourage people to report crimes so a log can be made and police can come and their presence may be seen. On National Night Out they planned a separate event at this intersection for people in the area who don't have one at their own block. Overall the feeling was positive although there seemed to be a little pessimism about apathy of residents.
- **38th and Cedar:** This area has developed in the last few years. They have an active business association and have erected a large sign and improved some lighting.
- **38th Street and 42nd Avenue:** Longfellow has implemented storefront revitalization.
- **CCP-SAFE:** Karen from CCP-SAFE works with East 38th Street from Chicago to Hiawatha Avenue. She is part of the Minneapolis police department as a civilian and has a partner who's a police officer. In Minneapolis there are 24 Safe teams broken up into districts. Some have one side of 38th Street, others have both, determined by neighborhoods, if the neighborhood encompasses both sides of 38th Street then so does the safe district. They organize block clubs, McGruff houses, safe houses and deal with the media. They work with crime prevention or fraud or whatever's in the area. They work with all ages/cultures and focus on livability issues. They don't deal with one-on-one issues because of fear about retaliations so they need neighborhoods to work together. At times they focus on problem addresses.

Thirty-eighth Street is a heavy traffic area and some of the crime can be because of this traffic can provide criminals with easy ways to leave the neighborhood quickly by traveling on Hiawatha, Chicago, or Cedar Avenues. There are more vehicles than foot traffic. An increase in foot traffic would decrease crime. Seventy percent of blocks have organized block clubs but this doesn't always include 38th Street, rather most are on the side residential streets. If block clubs were along 38th Street this could increase communication and ownership in the street and get residents and businesses to work more together. She has seen an increase in graffiti. She comments there are many great businesses working hard. Good neighborhood visibility is missing. To increase foot traffic, 38th Street needs better lighting, which would lead to an increase in perception of safety. There are some open areas and parking lots and these have some hidden spots. These areas breed crime. It would also be helpful to put in road diversions to make 38th Street not as fast of a through

street, but this probably won't happen because 38th Street is a fire route. With more road diversions though and slower automobile traffic, foot traffic would naturally increase.

- **Lake Street Partners:** executive director, Sharyl Paaltzer

Lake Street Partners runs along Lake Street from Hiawatha Avenue to Highway 35W. This partnership focuses on economic development and is business and resident driven. They have a 23-member board of directors made up of half residents and half business owners. Four neighborhoods: Powderhorn Park, Central, Phillips and Corcoran, participate in this collaboration. In 1994 a Project Team began to get the ball rolling. By 1996 they had raised enough money and hired a team of consultants to produce a report called: "Lake Street at the Crossroads". In January 1997 Lake St. Partners began.

The reason for the start up of this partnership was because all the neighborhoods just came up to Lake Street, none contained both sides. Three city council wards also divide them. They have five standing committees: marketing, safety, operations, business development, and a new project team.

Their main goal is to have businesses move into the area, promote a positive environment for business growth, and coordinate with police at intersections. The marketing committee prepares professional brochures to give out to prospective businesses, the project team takes a proactive stance to business growth (ie. the Sears project that is coming -- how to do secondary development around Sears), the business development committee discovers who owns what is the value, zoning restrictions to respond to businesses.

Lake Street Partners wants to be a "one-stop shop" for businesses so that they do not have to contact multiple neighborhoods in order to move to the area. This partnership has no recognized term, they will be active until Lake Street is revitalized. Each neighborhood appoints residents, council representatives, one representative from each of the four neighborhoods and at-large positions filled by US bank, Midtown Greenway, Urban Ventures and Housing.

Lake Street is different from 38th Street, but some of the ideas done by Lake Street Partners could be transferable to 38th Street. Lake has all businesses without any residential sections, but it does have many residential side streets. Lake has "big box" stores like Rainbow Foods, and fast food places like Wendy's and White Castle. Some smaller shops along this street are similar to 38th Street. Aesthetically the streets are similar with many run-down building fronts and no trees, flower boxes or nicer street lighting to make the street more inviting. I don't think 38th Street will ever turn into a Lake Street with all businesses, but the partnership would be something transferable. Even though Lake Street still has some problem areas overall the Lake Street Partners have been successful in attracting businesses and increasing communication.

- **Nokomis Village:** In an article in the *Star Tribune*, Steve Brandt explored the strip of shops along 34th Avenue, which serves as a Main Street, bounded by Lake Nokomis, the Mississippi River, Crosstown Hwy 62, Minnehaha Parkway and the creek. The 34th Avenue business district is the city's only neighborhood shopping area with all

four types of anchor businesses that repeatedly draw customers: supermarket, pharmacy, hardware store and bank. Nokomis, in fact, has two banks, and Sorensen said, "Banks are the number one reason for the success of this corner . . . The banks pull hundreds of people through this corner every day, bringing money, hopefully spending some money." The Nokomis Village commercial strip stretches intermittently from 50th to 56th Streets. Aside from some green banners, it thrives despite a lack of the streetscape features, such as pedestrian lighting or plantings, sometimes used by business owners to jazz up their image. Nokomis village is great because it meets the needs of the area. People seem to have an emotional desire to shop in their own neighborhood. Although it is not extraordinarily attractive it is well established.⁹

- **Beautification in Midway:** The Midway Coalition in St. Paul does much along Snelling Avenue; flowers and trees are cared for by a neighborhood partnership started about six years ago. Hamline Midway is in charge but they get support from businesses on Snelling and contributions from volunteer labor. Schools help out during the year with weeding and cleaning. It takes about \$1,200-\$1,600 a year to upkeep. Up-front costs and general operating funds came mainly through businesses and volunteer labor. They did ask for public contributions once.
- **BUDies - Bryant BUDies:** This acronym stands for the Bryant Unity Development garden at 40th and Third Avenue. They are a group of concerned residents who walk around the neighborhood and notice boarded-up houses, problem areas and meet new people. Their purpose is to get a feel for the problem properties, inform neighbors of Bryant neighborhood activities, to help CCP-SAFE do door-knocking for blocks that don't have block clubs, and to hand out flyers for BNO activities.¹⁰

⁹ Brandt, Steve. "Customers Loyalty Fuels Hidden Village Near Nokomis." Star Tribune 11 May 1997.

¹⁰ www.tcfreenet.org/people/mcmartin/buddies.htm the Bryant BUDies web site

IX. FURTHER RESEARCH

- More research will need to be done in order to find funding sources and assess businesses and residents if they will need to be responsible for part of the cost. Discovering the overall economic feasibility, researching current consumer expenditures, finding the potential for additional economic growth from consumer markets, and marketing strategies for economic growth in the vicinity will need to be done. A full analysis of the area's general population, the population of earners, characteristics of both, and buying power are prudent to determine and evaluate in order to determine the area market profile. Such information would include the categories of median income and total personal income; level of education, aggregate consumption patterns, age and lifestyle of the population within the trade area, etc.
- A competition profile is a necessary component of determining the success of a business node, because it takes into consideration questions such as:
 - A. Is the market experiencing saturation or nearing it for the proposed type of business (es)?
 - B. What is the current level of concentration?
 - C. What is the proximity of established businesses to the business considered?
 - D. How close are the nearest commercial nodes and retail centers? How strong are they?
 - E. What is the variety price and products of these nodes and retail centers?
- A comprehensive survey will need to be done, one that produces statistically significant data regarding what neighborhood residents, businesses and staff are really looking for.

X. CONCLUSIONS

It is easy to see that there is much that has been done and much more to be done to improve 38th Street. In order to get the ball rolling, the most pressing need is to get an independent team of people representative of the area to be on an East 38th Street Task Force. Once this team is formed they can go about organizing all of the ways to carryout improvements for 38th Street.

Their first task will be to involve residents, businesses, neighborhood staff and the City of Minneapolis and make sure that everyone is on board. Once this has taken place, efforts to form an identity for 38th Street must occur and then from here specific plans can be decided upon. Getting a "big picture" view for 38th Street will allow everyone to see how incremental steps of improvements fit into the whole of 38th Street. Breaking down 38th Street into segments to focus on will allow the team to not get overwhelmed with the scope of the task.

From here, efforts to prioritize projects and regions for receiving public funding support and decisions about where to convert either homes to businesses or businesses to homes will need to take place.

Next, take steps to recruit or move businesses and promote beautification, crime prevention and structural changes like zoning restrictions, and façade improvements. By focusing on what's already begun on 38th Street and capitalizing on the energy and desire of people who are impacted by 38th Street, great improvements to can be achieved.

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